



AAHQ Fall 2025 Conference

QUALITY UNBOXED: FRESH STRATEGIES FOR PATIENT-CENTERED IMPROVEMENT

OCTOBER 3, 2025

8:00 AM TO 3:30 PM

CHI ST. VINCENT

Sponsors



CONFERENCE AGENDA

7:30-8 AM	CHECK IN, VISIT EXHIBITORS, BREAKFAST
8-8:15 AM	WELCOME / Devin Terry, PhD, RN, ACNS-BS, CPHQ, AAHQ President
8:15-9:15 AM	CARDIAC REHABILITATION AND STEMI MANAGEMENT / Amanda Xaysuda, MPH
9:15-10:15 AM	AGE-FRIENDLY PATIENT CARE / Dr. Gohar Azhar, MD
10:15-10:30 AM	BREAK, VISIT EXHIBITORS, SILENT AUCTION
10:30-11:30 AM	PATIENT SAFETY INDICATORS - (PSIS) & CODING / Susan Wallace, MEd, RHIA, CCS, CDIP, CCDS, CRC, FAHIMA
11:30 AM-12:15 PM	LUNCH, VISIT EXHIBITORS, SILENT AUCTION
12:15-1:15 PM	INTEROPERABILITY AND IT: CMS UPDATES, TEFCA, AND QHINS / Dr. Joseph Sanford Dr. Craig Levoy Anne Santifer Clayton Journagan Justin Villines, Moderator
1:15-2:15 PM	REDUCING READMISSIONS: STRATEGIES AND INSIGHTS / Dr. Darren Freeman, MD, CMO
2:15-2:30 PM	BREAK, VISIT EXHIBITORS, SILENT AUCTION
2:30-3:30 PM	COMMUNITY PARAMEDICINE AND EMS INNOVATION / Amber Brossett, LCSW, EMR Chaundra Hegwood, Paramedic, CP-C
3:30 PM	WRAP UP & ADJOURN / Devin Terry, PhD, RN, ACNS-BS, CPHQ, AAHQ President

CONTINUING EDUCATION

6.0 NURSING CONTACT HOURS will be awarded to all nurses who attend the entire event, sign in at registration, and complete the follow-up evaluation process attesting to their attendance via Survey Monkey within one week following the event date.

ARKANSAS HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION is approved with distinction as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the VTL Center for Professional Development, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

6.0 CPHQ hours have been approved by NAHQTM.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

Registrations should be received by 8:00 AM Oct. 1, 2025. Advance cancellations before Oct. 1, 2025 will be refunded minus a \$50 administrative fee. Those who cancel after Oct. 1, or fail to attend, are responsible for the entire fee. Alternates are acceptable, but non-member fees may apply.

**This conference is by AAHQ, an affiliate of AHA. Attendees must be an AAHQ member or eligible for membership due to employment by an AHA member hospital or institution. AAHQ welcomes quality professionals from organizations not eligible for AHA membership at the non-member rate. If your facility is eligible for AHA membership but chooses not to be a member, you may not attend this event. If you have questions, please contact Cindy Harris directly at 501.224.7878 Ext 145.*



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REGISTRATION FORM

FEES DUE BY OCTOBER 1

PLEASE SELECT ONE - YOU MUST CHECK A BOX FOR YOUR REGISTRATION TO BE COMPLETE

☐ \$65 AAHQ MEMBERS, EARLY BIRD SPECIAL (BEFORE SEPT 15) ☐ \$80 AAHQ MEMBERS (AFTER SEPT 15)

☐ \$115 NON-MEMBERS, EARLY BIRD SPECIAL (BEFORE SEPT 15) ☐ \$130 NON-MEMBERS (AFTER SEPT 15)

WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER? VISIT WWW.ARKAHQ.ORG

NAME AND TITLE OF CONTACT PERSON

ORGANIZATION/FACILITY

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

EMAIL ADDRESS

PHONE NUMBER

METHOD OF PAYMENT

☐ CHECK IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ _____ PAYABLE TO THE ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION FOR HEALTHCARE QUALITY IS ENCLOSED.

YOU MUST FAX OR MAIL THIS FORM TO COMPLETE REGISTRATION.

☐ CREDIT CARD # _____ ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD

Expiration Date _____ CVV _____ Name on Card _____

Cardholder's Billing Address (Please include zip code)

Signature _____ Cardholder Phone # _____

CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO *Arkansas Association for Healthcare Quality*

MAIL REGISTRATION TO *Arkansas Association for Healthcare Quality—419 Natural Resources Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205, 501.224.0519 (fax)*

PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL CREDIT CARD INFO. CALL, FAX OR MAIL ONLY.

MEET THE PRESENTERS



DR. GOHAR AZHAR MD, PROFESSOR, UAMS

Dr. Gohar Azhar is a professor of geriatrics and holds the Jackson T. Stephens endowed chair in clinical affairs at the UAMS Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging in the UAMS College of Medicine. She is the director of clinical research, director of the Walker Memory Clinic, and co-director of the Cardiovascular Aging Program.

Dr. Azhar graduated from Dow Medical College in Karachi, Pakistan. She completed her internship and residency in internal medicine at the Western Pennsylvania Hospital in Pittsburgh where she was recognized for her “Excellence in Ambulatory Care” and as an “Outstanding Resident.” Subsequently, she trained as a geriatrician and physician-scientist at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and the Division on Aging, at Harvard Medical School, in Boston, before moving to Little Rock and joining UAMS in 2002.

At the Thomas and Lyon Longevity Clinic at UAMS, Dr. Azhar sees older adult patients as a primary care geriatrician. In addition, as director of the Walker Memory Clinic, she provides care for patients with different types of memory disorders and is actively involved in clinical trials of Alzheimer’s disease, related dementias, and other aging conditions.



AMBER BROSSETT, LCSW, EMR

Amber Brossett is a licensed clinical social worker and systems thinker based in Little Rock, Arkansas. Since earning her MSW from UALR in 2015, she has worked at the intersection of crisis response, emergency care, and mental health – advocating for the well-being of first responders and the communities they serve.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Amber earned a Graduate Certificate in Emergency and Disaster Management from American Public University, deepening her commitment to those on the front lines. Her training informs her work designing systems that prioritize responder resilience, coordinated crisis response, and sustainable healthcare quality. Her career spans emergency departments in Dallas, Washington D.C., and Arkansas, where she served as an emergency department social worker at CHI St. Vincent. There, she championed reforms to address high-utilization patterns contributing to provider burnout. After the birth of her son, she transitioned into patient experience, continuing to promote compassionate, data-driven care.

Amber now serves as the first social worker embedded in an EMS service in Arkansas at MEMS. In partnership with the UALR School of Social Work, she is leading research on how community case management and first responder mental health interventions can reduce burnout and improve retention – hypothesizing that targeted support for high-utilizers can drive measurable improvements in healthcare and first responder quality. Her work is rooted in advocacy, systems change, and the belief that healthcare quality is about people, not just metrics. Amber is a frontline soul navigating a broken map – and bold enough to draw a better one.

MEET THE PRESENTERS



DARREN FREEMAN, MD

Dr. Darren Freeman graduated from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Medicine in 2008. Following medical school, Dr. Freeman completed a residency in Family Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Area Health Education Center-West in Fort Smith, Arkansas. After approximately five years of practicing traditional family medicine in his hometown, Dr. Freeman joined Conway Regional Health System as a hospitalist in 2016. He has steadily taken on leadership roles within the organization, serving on multiple medical staff committees including the medical executive committee and as the chairperson of Primary Care. He was also involved in the development of the graduate medical education programs at Conway Regional and served as the associate program director for the Family Medicine program for the first four academic years of the program's existence. After completion of a certification program through Emory University, Dr. Freeman was named Conway Regional's first-ever Chief Medical Officer in December 2024. His areas of focus are credentialing, medical staff relations, physician advising, and the shared-governance structure of the medical staff and administration at Conway Regional. He is a board-certified family physician by the American Board of Family Medicine. Dr. Freeman is a fellow of American Academy of Family Physicians and a member of the Arkansas Academy of Family Physicians, the Society of Hospital Medicine, and the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine. In addition to his duties at the hospital, he also serves as a hospice medical director and has a passion for high-quality, compassionate end-of-life care. Dr. Freeman is married and enjoys spending time with his five children, usually on the lake, the river, or the golf course.



CHAUNDRA HEGWOOD, PARAMEDIC, CP-C

Captain Chaundra Hegwood is the Clinical Management Coordinator and a nationally certified paramedic and community paramedicine specialist with 20 years in EMS at MEMS in Little Rock, Arkansas - 8 in Community Paramedicine. Chaundra is a trailblazer in patient-centered care, bridging emergency response with long-term support for vulnerable populations and is committed to advancing patient-centered care beyond the walls of traditional healthcare. Her frontline insight and innovation to her work reflects a strong belief in proactive, relationship-based healthcare – supporting both patients and providers through thoughtful, systems-level interventions. Chaundra's dedication to EMS and community health makes her a driving force in reshaping how emergency care can serve as a gateway to lasting health outcomes.

She has received multiple honors, including the Arkansas EMS Star of Life, a Humanitarian Award, a Servant Leadership Award, and Employee of the Year. Chaundra serves on the MEMS Crisis Assistance Team (MCAT), local homeless coalitions, and the Adult Protective Services Multi-Disciplinary Team, reflecting her deep commitment to collaborative, systems-level care.

Currently completing her BA in Criminal Justice, Chaundra continues to lead with compassion and purpose. Her guiding philosophy: "If the opportunity presents itself to help somebody, do it. Be a blessing to yourself and others any chance you get."

MEET THE PRESENTERS



CLAYTON JOURNAGAN

Clayton Journagan serves as the Director of Information Services at North Arkansas Regional Medical Center (NARMC), where he oversees IT operations and Clinical Informatics to support high-quality patient care. His career spans diverse industries, including K-12 education, finance, managed service providers, and healthcare, giving him a unique perspective on technology's role in improving operations and outcomes. Clayton has led projects in interoperability, system integration, and general workflow improvement. He is passionate about leveraging technology to enhance care delivery, ensure compliance, and foster innovation in healthcare environments.



CRAIG LEVOY, MD

Dr. Craig S. Levoy is a board-certified family physician and healthcare executive currently serving as Chief Medical Officer for the Community Quality Alliance, a clinically integrated network affiliated with Northwest Health comprised of over 400 providers managing 30,000+ attributed lives in value-based contracts. He also serves as the Medical Director for Community Health Systems' Ambulatory Medical Record, overseeing EMR applications across 1,500+ ambulatory clinical sites. Dr. Levoy is board certified in Health Care Quality & Management and holds specialized certifications in HIV Medicine. Under his leadership, his organization has achieved multi-year improvements in shared savings and significant cost reductions through innovative care management programs. He serves on athenahealth's Clinical Advisory Board, providing strategic guidance on EMR product development and clinical features. Dr. Levoy earned his MD from the University of South Florida and completed his family medicine residency at Bayfront Health, where he served as Chief Resident.



ANNE SANTIFER, BBA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, SHARE HIE

Anne Santifer, an accomplished professional serving as the Director of the Office of Health Information Technology, a division of the Arkansas Department of Health. With an impressive track record spanning over 15 years, Anne has excelled in various domains, including operations, development, and policy implementation, particularly in bolstering Medicaid quality improvement programs.

MEET THE PRESENTERS



JOSEPH SANFORD, M.D

Joseph Sanford is the Director of the UAMS Institute for Digital Health & Innovation (IDHI) and Associate Vice Chancellor – Chief Clinical Informatics Officer at UAMS. He also serves as associate professor in the Departments of Anesthesiology and Biomedical Informatics. A leader in telehealth, Dr. Sanford helped expand UAMS virtual care access during COVID-19, increasing virtual visits 36-fold and securing support for free COVID-related care and statewide digital health access. Under his leadership, IDHI has delivered over 20 long-standing telemedicine and 10 distance education programs to rural Arkansas. He co-directed IDHI's Healthcare Analytics Division, collaborating with public and private partners on disease modeling, technology pilots, and six patent applications. As CCIO, he leads clinical information system innovation, focusing on user-centered design. An Arkansas native, Dr. Sanford holds a medical degree from UAMS and a



SUSAN WALLACE, MED, RHIA, CCS, CDIP, CCDS, CRC, FAHIMA, VICE PRESIDENT OF INPATIENT SERVICES

Susan Wallace provides consultation in Clinical Documentation Integrity, DRG management, and coding implications in CMS quality measures. She has over 45 years of experience in the HIM field. Susan is a member of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), the Arkansas HIMA, AAPC, and the Association of Clinical Documentation Integrity Specialists (ACDIS).



AMANDA XAYSUDA, MPH

Amanda Xaysuda is the Director of Strong Hearts Rehabilitation Center at the Arkansas Heart Hospital. With a background in clinical recruitment and retention for obesity prevention research, Amanda joined the Heart in 2016 to help establish its first cardiac rehabilitation program from the ground up. Since then, she has expanded the program to four sites across central Arkansas, covering nearly 100 miles. Along with cardiac and Pritikin-certified intensive cardiac rehab, Amanda also oversees the Heart Hospital's pulmonary rehab and PAD exercise therapy programs, as well as the Hospital's employee wellness program. She currently serves as the Immediate Past President of the Arkansas Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Association. Amanda is dedicated to expanding cardiac rehab services to all patients who can benefit from exercise and educational programming, with a particular focus on ending the progression of cardiovascular disease through prevention and prehabilitation.

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THANK YOU.



CONTACT US

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