



New Visions of Quality Care: **Improve Performance With Baldrige**

by Kay Kendall

First, an easy question: *Is evidence-based medicine practiced in your hospital?* Your answer is likely “Yes,” because your organization wants to achieve treatment excellence using proven protocols. Now, the harder question: *Does your hospital practice evidence-based management?* If your answer is “No,” I’d challenge you by asking, “Why not?” No matter the size or location of your health care organization, engaging your teams utilizing *The Baldrige Excellence Framework* will help you achieve performance improvement at many levels. Whether your goal is delivering increased value to your patients, families, communities, and stakeholders; enhancing

effectiveness by targeting specific areas for quality improvement; or just bringing your entire organization onto the same page across its many divisions, the *Framework* can bring laser focus to your hospital’s outcomes, satisfaction ratings, and leadership practices.

As Steve Bovey, Quality Improvement Coordinator for Adventist Health Castle and a 2017 Baldrige Award recipient, says, “If you are tired of putting out fires – and the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing – then you may want to consider using the *Baldrige Framework*. It’s not so much about an award as it is about helping you get the results you need.”



BALDRIGE AND HEALTH CARE

Health care wasn't even eligible to participate when the Baldrige National Quality Award was enacted into law in 1987. Was the thinking that health care didn't "need" to address quality improvement in the same way that manufacturing and service industries do?

Fast forward nearly a dozen years. Health care finally became eligible to apply for the Baldrige National Quality Award in 1998, with the amendment of Baldrige legislation to include both health care and education. Four more years passed before the first health care system earned a Baldrige National Quality Award. But since SSM Health Care received that first recognition in 2002, there has been at least one Baldrige Award recipient from the health care sector *every single year*. No other sector or industry can boast that impressive record.

Why is this? Health care was very quick to embrace the *Baldrige Excellence Framework*, recognizing that it would pay off in huge performance improvement dividends. With quality and patient safety improvement at the top of every hospital's goal list, working with and through the *Framework* is a natural match for health care.

In fact, two research studies clearly show the superior performance of those health care organizations that choose the *Baldrige Excellence Framework* to guide their organizations.*

But don't just read the research. Listen to the CEOs of Baldrige Award recipients in health care:

"[The Baldrige Framework] helped us create discipline around our processes, improved our financial performance, and improved our focus on key quality metrics."
—Kyle Bennett, President and CEO, Memorial Hospital and Health Care Center, 2018 Baldrige Award Recipient

"The hard work is worth it. Getting to preeminence [...] is where we want to be, and we know that the *Baldrige Framework* will help us get there."
—Greg Haralson, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Memorial Hermann Sugar Land Hospital, 2016 Baldrige Award Recipient

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and RECOVERY is POSSIBLE.

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"Before we engaged with the Baldrige Criteria, we thought that we wanted to be the best community hospital anywhere. And then we started to use the Baldrige Criteria, and we started to dream bigger. We thought about being the best hospital in the nation."
—Jayne Pope, CEO, Hill Country Memorial, 2014 Baldrige Award Recipient

"The Criteria really focused us. [...] To stay on track and get results for our patients – both quality and safety – you have to have an engaged workforce. [...] When everyone's engaged, we have very consistent results."
—Janet Wagner, CEO, Sutter Davis Hospital, 2013 Baldrige Award Recipient

"[Baldrige] isn't just about improvement and measurement. It is about our core values, our culture, and – ultimately – our vision for the future. [...] For those considering the Baldrige Framework, I want to testify to the magnitude of the

results you can achieve. It can get discouraging, but I urge you to be relentless! When we occasionally grew tired, we fired up our strategic advantage – a "Can Do" spirit – and reminded everyone that it was the use of the *Baldrige Framework* that had boosted our ability to deliver better care to our patients. And, in the end, that is the most important thing. Delivering better care to our patients – and having a greater and more positive impact on the lives of all of our customers."
—Nancy Schlichting, CEO, Henry Ford Health System, 2011 Baldrige Award Recipient

The *Baldrige Excellence Framework* is regularly reviewed and revised every two years. Revisions have one overarching purpose: for the *Framework* and the *Criteria* to reflect **the leading edge of validated leadership and performance practice**. That sounds like evidence-based management to me. Why not check it out for yourself? ➤



The team at BaldrigeCoach would be glad to help guide your hospital's quest for process improvement. As CEO and Principal of BaldrigeCoach, **Kay Kendall** coaches organizations on their paths to performance excellence using the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria as a framework. Her team, working with health care and other organizations, has mentored 23 National Quality Award recipients. In each edition of *Arkansas Hospitals*, Kay offers readers quality improvement tips from her coaching playbook. Contact Kay at 972.489.3611 or Kay@Baldrige-Coach.com.



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