

2022 Stroke Quality Improvement Award Overview

MINNESOTA STROKE PROGRAM

Background

A successful and effective hospital stroke program requires a commitment to continuous quality improvement. These efforts drive the quality of care delivered to stroke patients, which leads to better outcomes. The Minnesota Stroke System includes 13 comprehensive stroke centers, 10 primary stroke centers, and 93 designated acute stroke ready hospitals. The monitoring of program metrics and identification of opportunities for improvement are required for all levels of designation.

Purpose

The award program's primary purpose is to recognize and showcase successful quality improvement (QI) initiatives throughout Minnesota Stroke System participating hospitals. The program also aims to:

- Provide an opportunity for hospitals to share and discuss their QI projects
- Further a culture of peer-to-peer learning and collaboration
- Encourage creative and innovative approaches to QI
- Highlight hospitals that have begun embedding health equity in their QI work

What's new in 2022?

After completing two rounds of the Stroke QI Award Program, we applied lessons learned and feedback received to make necessary updates to the application:

- The format of the application has been changed based on feedback from applicants wanting more flexibility in how they share their QI story. Instead of having individual text boxes for each question, we now ask for a narrative.
- Bulleted lists have been provided as guidance to assist applicants in understanding what elements the reviewers are looking for in their QI story.
- A new section has been added to the application asking hospitals to describe their location and the community they serve. As mentioned in the application, this provides the reviewers with important context and appreciation as to where the QI initiative is taking place. We know that their location and patient population can influence the QI project.
- Special consideration will be given to QI initiatives that incorporate and/or address health equity. Health equity considerations have been added as optional elements in each section of the application. This is not a requirement. Projects that do not address health equity in their application will not be deducted points.

FAQ

How do I apply?

If your hospital is participating in the Minnesota Stroke System, complete the 2022 Stroke Quality Improvement Award Fillable Application. Email the completed application to Ally at allyson.fujii@state.mn.us as a Microsoft Word document or PDF. You will receive an email confirmation within two business days once it has been received.

When is this due?

Applications will be accepted until **4:30 pm CT on Wednesday, August 31st**.

How will the award recipients be recognized?

We plan to acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of the award winners on our Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Stroke Program website and a live webinar in January 2023. Award recipients will also receive an award plaque to recognize this achievement.

How many awards will be given?

In the past, there have been six recipients awarded that fall into three categories: Continuous Impact, Operational Excellence, and Outstanding Achievement. This is subject to change based on the number and quality of applications we receive.

Can we apply again if we were not selected last year?

Yes! We welcome you to apply again using the new application.

Can we apply again if we won an award last year?

Yes! As long as this year's application is about a new QI initiative, you are welcome to apply.

When will award winners be notified?

Applicants will receive an email notification if their application has been selected for an award no later than November 2022.

How do you score applications?

We have an internal review committee that independently evaluates each application. After each reviewer completes their scoring, all score cards are collated, and the reviewers meet to deliberate over the results. Applications will be scored based on:

- Clarity of the narrative
- Completeness of the answers
- Quality of plan design and implementation

- Display of results
- *Incorporation of health equity (Optional)*

Why does it seem there is more information to include this time?

After completing two cycles of the Stroke Quality Improvement Award Program, we learned that more guidance and space for creativity would be helpful while filling out the application. We added additional criteria to better guide applicants as to what we are looking for while we are scoring. Moving towards section narratives enables greater flexibility to applicants in the sharing of their quality improvement story.

Why is health equity being given special consideration?

The Minnesota Stroke Program is committed to continuous quality improvement. Health equity is an important part of this commitment to ensure all Minnesotans are receiving the best stroke care possible. We are encouraging you to consider disaggregating your data by patient characteristics such as race/ethnicity, housing status, or insurance status to see whether all patients benefitted equitably from your QI project. You may also consider looking at other performance measures by these characteristics and designing future projects to address any disparities you identify. Incorporating or addressing health equity is not required for this round of applications, but projects that do so will receive additional points during scoring.

I want every single patient to have the best, how do I know the care was equitable?

One way to start incorporating health equity into your work is breaking down your data by patient characteristics, such as race/ethnicity, housing status, or insurance. This is one way to do an “equity check” to see if all patients are benefitting from your improvement efforts. Stratifying by patient characteristics can provide insight into whether the issue is affecting everyone equally, or if it is affecting one group more than others. Digging deeper into your data can help you focus your work and better inform your QI initiative. Again, this is not a requirement to apply nor will applications be penalized for not including health equity.

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO ALLY AT ALLYSON.FUJII@STATE.MN.US

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04/22/2022 To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-3934.