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Kansas health providers honored for innovation and leadership in improving health care quality, safety, and value

Four Kansas health care providers have been recognized with the Leadership in Quality awards for their efforts to improve health care quality, safety, and value. The awards were sponsored by the KAMMCO Foundation and presented jointly by the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative and the Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc. at a ceremony this month in Wichita.

Children's Health Network based in Kansas City was named winner of the 2019 Leadership in Quality Award and presented with a cash prize of \$5,000 from the KAMMCO Foundation.

The 2019 Physician Champion Award was presented to **Craig Concannon, MD**, an internal medicine physician at Beloit Medical Center.

Awards of Merit were presented to **Nora Elizalde**—a certified nurse midwife at Bob Wilson Memorial Hospital in Ulysses, which is part of Centura Health—and **Niki Lamb**, a registered nurse and the director of quality assurance, infection control, and risk management at Sumner County Hospital District #1 in Caldwell.

The awards were presented by Jerry Slaughter on behalf of the KAMMCO Foundation board of directors.

"KAMMCO Foundation is proud to recognize and reward the quality improvement efforts of Kansas health care providers," Slaughter said. "The providers nominated and selected for the awards are truly leaders and innovators in improving the health of communities, enhancing the experience of patients, and helping reduce overall cost of care."

The honorees were recognized during a ceremony at the 11th Annual Summit on Quality in Wichita, which is jointly hosted by the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative (KHC) and the Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc. (KFMC), two organizations that work to advance health care quality improvement across the state. Dr. Concannon accepted his award preceding the event.

Jon Rosell, co-executive director of KHC, said the Leadership in Quality awards were created in 2013 to recognize individuals and organizations in Kansas who dedicate time, energy, and talent to ensure safe, quality care for Kansas patients.

"We congratulate all four of this year's honorees and are proud of their work here in Kansas," said Rosell. "The quality improvement work being done by leaders across Kansas is making a difference in the lives of patients, even while it may not come with a 'quality improvement' label on it."

Sarah Irsik-Good, president and CEO of KFMC, said this year's honorees each pursued unique approaches to improved quality of care and health outcomes. "Each of these leaders have worked to cultivate a culture of patient safety and continuous quality improvement," Irsik-Good said. "The future of health care is collaboration and patient-centered. The leaders and innovators in this work are constantly evaluating how they can improve care delivery and the patient experience."

2019 Leadership in Quality Award winner

Children's Health Network (CHN) is a clinically integrated pediatric network, which includes Children's Mercy and 23 community-based pediatric practices (10 located in Kansas). Beginning in 2015, CHN advanced pediatric value-based care by embracing a model, framework, and culture of transparency, continuous improvement, and collaboration. Participating practices have access to a variety of resources to

improve quality and reduce cost, including a web-based population health management platform to integrate near-real time data to facilitate pre-visit planning and patient outreach. Practices receive quarterly reports that evaluate their performance along 30 measures as well as the performance of other practices within the network. So far, the network has achieved significant improvement, ranging from 7 to 57 percentage point increases, across 12 of these measures. Four years ago, there was minimal quality improvement or medical home infrastructure in place and little coordination and collaboration across primary care practices. Today, CHN is a national leader in advancing value-based care and outcomes by fully embracing a model, framework, and culture of continuous improvement.

The magnitude and pace of CHN's quality improvement efforts is truly impressive, said Tom Bell, co-director of the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative. "That kind of change in culture and resulting success—implemented through ongoing process management and improvement efforts—exemplifies the goals Kansas Healthcare Collaborative has set with the Leadership in Quality Award," he said.

2019 Physician Champion Award winner

This year, the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative also recognized its first Physician Champion; the award reflects the important role physicians play in the quality improvement process and honors an individual who has consistently empowered others on the improvement journey. The 2019 Physician Champion honoree is **Dr. Craig Concannon**, who received his award at the May KHC board meeting. Dr. Concannon is an internal medicine physician at Beloit Medical Center. In nominating him, his colleagues stressed how critical Dr. Concannon's leadership is in furthering the overall organization's quality improvement efforts. They said he works to empower staff members to be on the leading edge with quality measures. Further, he serves to educate on quality statewide through the Kansas Clinical Improvement Collaborative (KCIC) and belongs to an Accountable Care Organization (ACO). Staff members said there is a culture of pride in being leaders in the state via the clinic ACO, Beloit Medical Center, P.A.—which helps further advance continuous quality improvement.

Award of Merit

Nora Elizalde is a certified nurse midwife at Bob Wilson Memorial Hospital—which is part of Centura Health—in Ulysses. In nominating her, Nora's colleagues praised her for ensuring expanded access to high-quality prenatal and delivery services across southwest Kansas and the Oklahoma panhandle. In addition to the hospital in Ulysses, she also has a clinic in Liberal and in Guymon, OK—meaning Nora travels more than 500 miles a week treating expectant mothers. Nora is uniquely qualified to best treat these women thanks to her Spanish fluency and Mexican heritage. She brings with her empathy, strong listening, and a genuine ability to connect with each one of her patients. Nora embodies whole person, patient-centered care.

Award of Merit

Niki Lamb is a registered nurse and director of quality assurance, infection control, and risk management at Sumner County Hospital District #1 in Caldwell. In nominating her, Niki's colleagues praised her for continually going above and beyond on behalf of patients. Among her most recent efforts they detailed: a rigorous hand hygiene program; development of a Quality Council; ensuring staff are fully vaccinated; diligent work with staff to maximize use of the EHR; and proactive involvement in the community to promote health and wellness outside of the facility. Her colleagues remarked that "Niki's passion for the health and wellness of others permeates our facility and our community."

→ More information on the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative: www.khconline.org/about.

→ More information on the Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc.: www.kfmc.org/about-kfmc.

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