



American  
Heart  
Association.

# Promoting Your American Heart Association Quality Improvement Award

## Branding & Communications Guide

Use this document to leverage promotional tactics, market your award-winning status and remain compliant with American Heart Association brand and communication standards.

# Celebrate your dedication to improving patient care.

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Because of your demonstrated success adhering to the latest treatment guidelines, the American Heart Association® has awarded your organization for quality improvement.

Your award is a significant achievement that represents the hard work happening across your organization. From staff to leadership, these awards require dedication, drive, and commitment.

It's important to share this achievement with your community. In this booklet, we have included numerous promotional tactics, as well as regulatory guidelines to help you easily articulate your organization's success. Please turn to the American Heart Association as a resource if you have questions in your marketing or communications efforts.

Please use [this link](#) to request a review or ask a question related to marketing, branding, or communications.



American  
Heart  
Association®

## **Section 1: Promoting Your Award**

Learn how to put your award to use for marketing and recognition. Leverage your award toolkit to the fullest extent with these tactical marketing and communication resources.

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## **Section 2: The Rulebook**

Follow legal and branding guidelines with each use of your award toolkit. Some materials require review by American Heart Association teams prior to publication, so please note the review process.

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# SECTION 1

## PROMOTING YOUR AWARD

This section was developed to assist you and your marketing/communications team with the promotion of your organization’s achievement.

Your organization’s quality achievement award is tangible evidence of your care team’s hard work and commitment to saving lives. It’s recognition worth celebrating. Full descriptions of each quality improvement award can be found online at [heart.org/qualitymeasures](http://heart.org/qualitymeasures).

### Recognition from the American Heart Association

Every patient deserves access to high-quality heart and stroke care, regardless of where they live. Each year, the American Heart Association recognizes hospitals across the country — from rural areas to the most populated cities — for consistently following up-to-date, research-based treatment guidelines for cardiovascular disease.

The American Heart Association offers numerous recognition opportunities for award-winning organizations. You may want to time your promotional efforts around certain events, including:



Receipt of the quality achievement recognition certificate



Recognition event at the International Stroke Conference for award-winning Get With The Guidelines - Stroke hospitals at designated levels



Recognition in the U.S. News & World Report “Best Hospitals” issue for designated quality award-winning levels



Other events and ads as determined by the American Heart Association

# Explaining Quality Improvement Programs

## Get With The Guidelines®

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**Get With The Guidelines – Stroke** is an in-hospital program for improving stroke care by promoting consistent adherence to the latest scientific treatment guidelines.

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**Get With The Guidelines – Heart Failure** is an inpatient quality program to improve outcomes for patients with heart failure, including improved treatment equity and increased healthy days at home.

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**Get With The Guidelines – Resuscitation** provides a data foundation for the effort to double in-hospital survival from cardiac arrest. Users can analyze data by day, date, time, unit and more to plan for effective process improvement. Patients receive an exclusive risk standardized survival report only available through Get With The Guidelines.

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**Get With The Guidelines – AFib** is designed to help hospitals align patient treatment with the latest scientific guidelines, and monitor outpatient ablation procedures. Atrial fibrillation (AFib) affects millions of Americans, often leading to heart-related complications as well as increasing the risk for stroke fivefold.

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**Get With The Guidelines – Coronary Artery Disease** gives hospitals the opportunity to track and improve care for their chest pain and heart attack patients. Also included are tools to maximum communication between all parts of the cardiac system of care providing the foundation for more timely transfer and treatment for geographic regions. The program also supports the development and implementation of regional systems of care.

# Explaining Quality Improvement Programs

## Rural Recognition



**Rural Get With The Guidelines Awards** recognize hospitals that work in rural areas. These awards are available to any Get With The Guidelines- Stroke, Heart Failure, or Coronary Artery Disease hospital located within a rural geography, as defined by RUCA codes. The measures are focused on a unique set of performance metrics related to the rural setting.

## Mission Lifeline®



**Mission: Lifeline EMS** in combination with recognition is designed to showcase emergency medical service organizations across the nation for excellent heart attack and stroke care. Prehospital personnel are the first providers of care to patients with cardiac emergencies. EMS plays a crucial role in cardiac systems of care and often sets the course for the patient's outcome.

## Target: Aortic Stenosis



**Target: Aortic Stenosis** Hospitals recognized for Target: Aortic Stenosis demonstrate compliance with the measures that support timely treatment for severe aortic stenosis, a structural heart condition.

# Internal Promotion Tactics

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We encourage you to celebrate success within your organization to alert stakeholders, share wins with leadership, inspire staff and build pride among your sites. Below are a few ways to promote your award internally.



## Present to Leadership

Share the news with your hospital's leadership (CEO and chief of staff, etc.) and your EMS agency's leadership (director or chief). Also inform local government councils and the state office of EMS. Use a simple email or a presentation with assets from the award toolkit.



## Include in Meetings

Notify other team members about your award by announcing your recognition achievement at scheduled staff gatherings, such as department meetings or in-service training.



## Feature in Newsletters

Include an article about your award in internal newsletters; a newsletter template is provided in your toolkit. Please follow all review protocol referenced in section 2 prior to publishing.



## Host an Award Ceremony

Schedule and host an award ceremony to celebrate internally. To host a successful award event, follow these helpful tips:

- Invite key team members, local dignitaries such as city/county council members, board members and the media
- Ask your American Heart Association Quality Improvement Consultant to provide a description of the program, its goals, and their experiences
- Take photos of your health care quality champions holding the certificate. Post photos online and in internal newsletters
- Create a celebratory atmosphere by sharing giveaway items and heart-healthy refreshments

# External Promotion Tactics

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Try these ideas to promote your award(s) to patients, visitors and your community. Many tactics can be accomplished with little or no additional expense.

## In-Hospital

Place signage throughout the building, including posters, table tents, in waiting rooms, cafeterias, elevators, and restrooms

Create an “advertisement” on the daily patient menu or internal closed-circuit TV programming

Promote your achievement on your hospital’s “on-hold” answering system, or in your email newsletter

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## Web

Include the recognition icon on your hospital website. Leverage approved language from the press release document in your toolkit, or content examples within this booklet.

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## Paid Advertising

Place a radio, newspaper, magazine or billboard ad promoting your achievement using American Heart Association approved materials in the following pages and in the award toolkit

Promote your achievement in a preview slide at the local movie theater. Leverage recognition icon from your award toolkit

**NOTE:** Any promotional materials (internal or external) that do not follow prescribed content exactly as outlined within this document or in the award toolkit must be reviewed by the American Heart Association Marketing & Communications team prior to being published. See section 2 for details.





# External Promotion Content Drafts

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In addition to the content included in this section, your award toolkit includes recognition icon(s) and press release content related to your awards. Use the content below and the assets in your toolkit to celebrate your award with external audiences.

## Radio Advertisements

*“At (NAME OF HOSPITAL/AGENCY), we’re committed to providing heart and stroke care that aligns with the latest research-based treatment guidelines. Studies show patients can recover better when clinicians consistently follow these guidelines. We’re proud to be recognized by the American Heart Association for our achievement in the (NAME OF PROGRAM/AWARD) quality program. It’s just another way (NAME OF HOSPITAL/AGENCY) is working to improve health care for you and your family.”*

## Telephone On-Hold Scripts

*“We’ve recently been recognized by the American Heart Association for our commitment to quality patient care. Join us in congratulating our physicians and nurses (or emergency medical providers) for working to close the gaps that separate patients from timely access to appropriate treatments”*

*“The care our patients receive is our number one priority. That’s why we’re proud to be among the hospitals and agencies recognized by the American Heart Association for our commitment to quality care.”*

## Social Media

See the following pages for example posts related to social media content.

# Social Media Content

Use the template social media copy included in your toolkit to share your award on social media platforms, and don't forget to tag the Association (@American\_Heart on X and Instagram, @AmericanHeart on Facebook); *If the template copy is used exactly as provided, no further review is required.*

## Social Media Content Ideas

**1** Post a link to the Get With The Guidelines features in *U.S. News and World Report*

**2** Post a photo of the hospital staff with the award or use Facebook/Instagram live to cover the award celebration

**3** Post a quote with a photo of a patient (or stock photo) to highlight how your achievement is making a positive impact on people in the community

**4** Post a quote with a photo of a physician or nurse who is impacted by the award, focusing on how the guidelines have positively impacted them

**5** Post a series of short (max 30 sec.) Q&A videos with staff who are passionate about providing quality care. Ask them to explain one of the guidelines in layperson's terms and why they strive to follow Get With The Guidelines for patients' safety and wellbeing

**6** Encourage staff members to re-share any posts that are published by your brand channels

**7** Share stories of patients or survivors (with permission) who were saved or rehabilitated because staff followed guidelines

**8** Encourage staff members to publish a few sentences on their personal accounts about why they strive to follow American Heart Association guidelines, and how nice it is to be recognized for their efforts

**9** Pick a few all-star staffers who are passionate about the guidelines and surprise them with the award — and maybe even a meaningful gift of some kind. Be sure to get their reaction on camera!

# Press Releases & Newsletters

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Template press release and newsletter copy are included in your award toolkit. **As long as the template is used exactly as provided with all blanks filled in appropriately, no further review is required.**

Award recipients are encouraged to distribute the template press release to local news media outlets within a 50-mile radius, including local affiliate and independent television/cable stations; local radio stations; local monthly, weekly and daily newspapers; and local magazines. Recipients may also post the press release to their websites.

Organizations may not distribute information about the American Heart Association or our quality improvement programs to national or regional media outlets, including network television, cable or radio stations; syndicated television, cable or radio programs; regional or national magazines; regional or national newspapers; local offices of national media outlets including newswires or news services; or online media outlets.

If additional information is added to the template news release, the Association must approve prior to release to local media. Please forward any requests for review to your regional quality improvement representative or submit for review using the [marketing & communications request for review form](#). Please allow at least 10 business days for approval.

## Media Inquiries

All media inquiries about the quality programs or American Heart Association resulting from media outlets outside of a hospital's local market (as described above) must be forwarded to American Heart Association communications staff. Submit inquiries using the [marketing & communications request for review form](#).

# SECTION 2

## THE RULEBOOK

This section provides detailed instructions on the appropriate use of the templates, recognition icons, and other promotional assets found in your toolkit. By following these regulations, you can enhance the visibility of your success both within your organization and throughout your community, while aligning with the Association's established brand standards.

**Please share this resource with your marketing and communications staff to assist them in their efforts.**

### Development & Approval of Promotional Materials

The Association has provided an award toolkit with template materials to assist you in promoting your achievement award. If you use these items without modification, you need not submit them for review.

If your organization develops promotional materials that make any other claim or statement beyond the sample verbiage in this document or other templates, the product must be approved by the American Heart Association. An institution's materials will be reviewed for approval on an individual basis. This includes advertising, press releases and social media posts.

Please forward any requests for review to your regional quality improvement representative or submit a request for review to the [marketing and communications request for review form](#). Please allow at least 10 business days for approval.

### When is Review by the American Heart Association Required?

Materials must be submitted for review if you do any of the below:

- Modify press release, newsletter or social media copy, or make any other claim or statement beyond the sample verbiage in this document/templates
- Add statistics that were not included in the original template
- Develop any materials other than the provided toolkit resources which include mention of the American Heart Association or award icon

*Note: Use of the Heart and Torch logo is prohibited*

# Recognition Icon Use

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Recognition icons were developed to help award recipients publicize their achievements. These icons are available for use by award achieving organizations on their website and other internal and external marketing materials. *Please note: Recognition icons cannot be altered, taken apart nor laid out on top of a color or image.*

- An organization may only use the icons that are applicable to the actual achievement level. *Icon use is subject to verification.*
- Icons include a notation of the year the award was given. *Organizations can use them for up to 12 months to promote their achievement.* Each year, the icons will be revised to reflect the current year.

## Mandatories for Icon Use

- 1. Use the icon in its entirety:** Elements of the icon may not be used independently, including the American Heart Association heart and torch logo. The elements of the icon include: Recognition icon, program logo (Get With The Guidelines, Mission: Lifeline, etc), American Heart Association co-branded signature.
- 2. Use the appropriate color model:** To maintain integrity to the logo design, always use the CMYK (four-color process) color model. Add a white box to frame the icon for use on colored surfaces, if necessary.
- 3. Ensure proper sizing:** When using the icon in print mediums, the vertical height of the American Heart Association signature must be 3/8" or taller. This is measured from the top of the capital "A" in "American" to the point at the bottom of the heart and torch symbol. In digital settings, the overall icon should measure 100px wide at minimum. There are no exceptions. Other than scale alteration, the icon cannot be altered in any way.
- 4. Allow for areas of non-interference:** The area of non-interference around the icon should equal one-quarter inch. There should be no other design elements within this area. This will ensure the icon is clearly visible in all presentations.

## Incorrect Icon Usage Examples:

Colored background



Background with pattern



Does not allow sufficient area of non-interference



Use of special effects



Rotate or skew



Overlapping photography



Separate components



Use an icon as a pattern



\*Get With The Guidelines Stroke Gold is used as an example, but these rules apply across all icons.

NOTE: Any icon use is subject to verification. If you have a question about your icon usage, please do reach out to the American Heart Association's marketing and communications team using the [request form](#) prior to publishing your award promotion.



# Logo & Tagline Use

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**Participants in our quality improvement programs may not use the American Heart Association Heart and Torch logo on any materials, including digital materials.**

**The Association name and logo may not be used by any organization without prior approval from the Association. The only exception to this rule includes content that's been supplied as part of your award toolkit (and only when used without alteration). All other instances must be reviewed for usage.**

The American Heart Association name may be used in text only if approved, prior to use. For text approval, forward the request to your regional AHA Quality Improvement consultant or submit a request to the [marketing & communications request for review form](#).

The quality improvement program names and logos may not be used by any organization in any capacity without prior approval by the Association. Awardees should use the recognition icons, and all program name mentions must be consistent with recommended language as outlined above.

The quality improvement program name and logo cannot be used in any materials in which an institution implies it is better than another or in materials that may imply an endorsement or recommendation of the institution or its services.

**NOTE:** The American Heart Association and quality improvement program names cannot be mentioned in any billing statements, invoices, price lists or other documents related to fees for hospital-related services.



# Language to Avoid

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To ensure all recognized organizations use approved messaging for their marketing and promotion efforts, please adhere to the below restrictions. To validate statistics, please forward materials to your American Heart Association Quality Improvement Consultant directly.

## Do Not Use

- Terms implying superiority and expertise, such as “best, better and only”
- Terminology that implies the award recognizes expertise, such as “experts in care”
- Language referring to combined or multi-module recognitions as an implied award. For example, the use of colloquialisms such as “Double Crown” or “Double Diamond” is not permitted. Acceptable verbiage for multiple-discipline winners would be “double achievement” or “dual award-winner”
- Language that implies a unique victory, such as “the only hospital to achieve an award” or similar phrases

## Appropriate Language for Use on a Limited Basis

- Language indicating “first” in city/county/state for an award is acceptable if it is validated by the Association through your quality improvement consultant. All reference to the number of awards in a given area must be validated by Quality Improvement Consultant.
- When referring to other hospitals, you may include reference to 100% of hospitals in a city, state or clearly defined area (larger or undefined areas, such as North Texas or Southeast Florida, are not acceptable).

## Examples: *(Assumes all information has been verified by Quality Improvement Consultant)*

- ✓ “We are one of only three hospitals in New York City to earn this award.”
- ✓ “We are the first hospital in Pennsylvania to receive dual awards in X and Y.”
- ✗ “We are the only hospital in the Central Iowa region to receive this award.”



# Web Linking Policy

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Quality achievement awardees are encouraged to use the appropriate recognition icon on their website. The icon should, in all cases, be a link to the American Heart Association's Quality Initiatives web page: [heart.org/quality](https://heart.org/quality)

## Linking to American Heart Association Web Pages

1. The American Heart Association does NOT endorse companies, products or services, and strictly prohibits any suggestion of endorsement, recommendation or superiority of one company, product or service over another company, product or service.
2. The Association does not allow framing of its website(s). When setting up a link to the American Heart Association's website(s), the Association's site should open in a new web browser window rather than displaying the pages in a frame of the linking site's web template.
3. Links to the Association's website(s) should be text-only, with the exception of the recognition icon. You may not use the Association's stylized heart and torch logo as a link, as our logo cannot be shown on your site.

The American Heart Association linking policy in its entirety can be found [here](#).

## Thank You

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If you have questions regarding marketing, advertising, public relations or promotions of our quality improvement programs, please contact your local American Heart Association quality improvement consultant or submit a request to the [marketing & communications request for review form](#).



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