BALDRIGE VS ACCREDITATION: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

What is the Baldridge Performance Excellence Program?
- Housed within the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the [Baldridge Performance Excellence Program](#) manages the nation's only presidential award for organizational excellence.
- The Baldrige Award honors US businesses as well as nonprofit, health care, and education organizations that demonstrate excellent performance in seven key areas: Leadership, Strategy, Customers, Knowledge management and performance measurement, Workforce, Operations, and Results.

What is AHCA/NCAL's National Quality Award Program?
- [The National Quality Award Program](#) is a three-level process that evaluates an organization's capabilities against the recognized standards for excellence in the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program.
- Each of the progressive award levels – *Bronze, Silver*, and *Gold*, requires organizations to provide more detailed demonstrations of superior performance.
- Organizations develop effective systems and processes for sustained improvement, resulting in better outcomes.
- All applications are reviewed by a group of trained examiners who spend hours assessing the organization against the national standards.
- The journey from Bronze to Gold creates a foundation that builds and sustains improvement beyond merely meeting the minimum requirements or minimum standards set forth by accredited agencies.

How does AHCA/NCAL's National Quality Award Program align with the Baldridge Performance Excellence Program?
- [Malcolm Baldrige](#)'s lasting effect in performance improvement has inspired nearly one hundred similar award programs based on the Baldrige Framework, including AHCA/NCAL's National Quality Award Program.

Accreditation versus Baldrige Performance Excellence: What is the difference?

Similarities	• Some accreditation organizations (e.g., Joint Commission) are now incorporating elements of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence into their assessments.
Differences	• Accreditation establishes that a facility meets the minimum standards necessary for patient care. In other words, it is like meeting the state and/or national regulation requirements.

	• The Baldrige Performance Excellence Program moves past minimum standards or requirements. Instead, the program focuses on performance excellence to build and improve the care and services provided. Baldrige helps organizations pursue excellence goals to improve their whole organization.
Benefits	• A 2016 study looked at outcomes of association-sponsored quality award programs compared to other nursing facilities. It concluded "in general, the nursing facilities that participate in and receive the Silver and Gold AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award perform at a higher level of quality for residents and sustain that heightened performance over a period of time." (Do Recipients of an Association-Sponsored Quality Award Program Experience Better Quality Outcomes Compared With Other Nursing Facilities Across the United States?) • The Baldrige Criteria is the basis of the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Program and has been proven to promote improved and sustained performance in long term care settings. • The Baldrige Criteria requires organizations to think beyond meeting the minimum standards required and shifts focus to continuous quality improvement efforts, by empowering organizations to develop effective systems and processes to reduce the potential for human error.
Limitations	• Only using accreditation to assess patient care may prevent optimal outcomes.
Recognition	• The Baldrige Performance Excellence Program is supported by the National Institute of Standards and Technology through the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Visit the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award website to learn more about the program. Discover the power of The Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. Contact the Quality Award team at qualityaward@ahca.org if you have additional questions.