



# 2025 **Quality Specialist** Certificate Program



**Session #1: Aug. 20-21**  
**Session #2: Oct. 1-2**  
**Session #3: Nov. 5-6**  
**Session #4: Dec. 3-4**

**Eligible  
for 38  
clock hours**



# 2025 Quality Specialist Certificate Program

## About the Program

Quality continues to drive how your organization succeeds in the marketplace impacting your reputation and bottom line. With the growing complexity of quality payment programs, measures, and consumer expectations, it is important to have strong quality leaders to manage your quality program.

This program supports individuals working in aging services who are serving as quality leads within their organizations or have an interest in expanding their knowledge of quality, safety, and performance improvement.

Staff in nursing homes or assisted living, new to or with experience in quality, will gain a solid understanding of quality-related regulatory requirements, federal and state quality programs, and how to help drive continuous improvement within your organization.

This eight-day interactive program is scheduled over four months to maximize learning and provide opportunities to apply concepts and strategies in practice between sessions. The program combines lecture, discussion, experiential learning, assignments, small and large group practice, and opportunities to interact with a variety of guest experts.

## Who Should Attend?

Any staff within your organization who is or will be assuming a lead or supporting role in your quality program.

## Why Attend? Participants in this Program Will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of State and Federal quality measures and programs and learn strategies to prioritize and address opportunities to improve your organization's performance, maximize reimbursement, and minimize citations and penalties.
- Discuss and apply the foundational principles and strategies of quality improvement.
- Learn practical strategies for building a fair and just culture in your organization.
- Gain a deeper understanding of root cause analysis and practice applying this approach to common quality and safety issues.
- Learn and apply an effective five step approach to process/quality improvement and apply this approach to an improvement project.
- Identify strong solutions to prevent adverse events from occurring or re-occurring in your organization.
- Explore and apply strategies to effectively use data to drive improvement.
- Learn the importance of approach, deployment, learning, and integration (ADLI) in creating systematic and effective processes throughout your organization and apply ADLI to key organizational processes.
- Examine and apply strategies to create and sustain a culture of resident and staff engagement.
- Create and/or strengthen your quality management/QAPI plan and approach.

## Location

### Sessions 1 and 2

LeadingAge Minnesota  
3001 Broadway Street NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55413

## Dates

Session #1: Aug. 20–21  
Session #2: Oct. 1–2  
Session #3: Nov. 5–6  
Session #4: Dec. 3–4

## Time

Sessions start between  
8 and 8:30 a.m. and  
end times vary.

**Sessions 3 and 4 - Virtual Zoom Meetings**

# 2025 Quality Specialist Certificate Program

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## Schedule

*(see full program schedule for complete details)*

### Session #1 – In-Person

**Aug. 20–21**

**Day 1: Introduction to Quality and Quality Culture**

**Day 2: Learning Culture (USER Model) and Root Cause Analysis**

### Session #2 – In-Person

**Oct. 1–2**

**Day 3 and 4: Data, Data, Data**

### Session #3 – Virtual

**Nov. 5–6**

**Day 5 and 6: Quality Assurance**

### Session #4 – Virtual

**Dec. 3–4**

**Day 7: State and Federal Quality Programs**

**Day 8: Wrap-up and Presentation of QI Projects**

## About the Certificate

Participants who attend the entire series will earn a Certificate of Completion which demonstrates in-depth professional study of a topic area on an individual basis. It does not denote certification or that someone is certified as a quality leader. In-person sessions are not recorded and cannot be made up if missed.

## Continuing Education Credits

This program has been designed to meet the CEU approval criteria for the Minnesota Board of Executives for Long Term Services and Supports (MN-BELTSS) and the continuing education requirements for the Minnesota Board of Nursing for contact hours. Participants may also request a general certificate of attendance. CEUs are earned only for the individual registered.

## Accommodations

LeadingAge Minnesota has negotiated a corporate rate with the Delta Hotels Minneapolis North-east. The room rate will be the lesser of these two rates: \$149 or 20% off standard rate (rates are set based on hotel availability). Fees are subject to local and MN taxes. Individual reservations can be made by using this [booking link](#). Note: Rate is not available for August dates due to the MN State Fair.

## Handouts

Participants will receive links to electronic handouts before each session and are encouraged to print them in advance or download to view on a laptop or tablet.

## Cut-Off/Cancellation

Registration cut-off date/cancellation deadline is 5 p.m. on Aug. 13, 2025. Cancellations must be made in writing and are subject to a \$25 processing fee. No refunds will be provided for no-shows. LeadingAge Minnesota reserves the right to cancel this training or any individual session.

## Conference Registration Fees

LeadingAge Minnesota Members – \$660 per person  
Prospective Members – \$925 per person

Registration fee includes a continental breakfast and lunch for in-person days. Registration is limited to 40 participants.

**REGISTER  
HERE**

## For Further Information

Olivia Scott, Events and Education Coordinator, at [oscott@LeadingAgeMN.org](mailto:oscott@LeadingAgeMN.org) or 651.603.3559 for assistance or if your registration has not been confirmed.

# Program Schedule

## Session #1– In-Person

**Day 1: Wednesday, Aug. 20 • 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.**  
**Introduction to Quality and Quality Culture**

### Introduction to Quality

- Describe the history of quality improvement principles and strategies.
- Compare and contrast quality assurance and performance improvement and how each impacts quality.
- Examine leadership's role in creating a culture of continuous quality improvement across an organization and practical strategies you can bring back to your organization.

*Julie Apold, PhD, Vice President of Quality and Performance Excellence, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis; Bob Dahl, President and CEO and Sandy Delgehausen, Regional Director of SNF Clinical Support/Metrics, Cassia, Edina*

### Building a Quality Foundation: Teamwork and Communication

- Describe principles of TeamSTEPPS® 2.0 for Long-Term Care that can be applied to create well-functioning teams, team communication, and teamwork to drive improvement.
- Apply key strategies to daily practice to bring back to your organization.

*Cyndi Siders, RN, MSN, DFASHRM, CPHRM, CPPS, CWCA, Executive Consultant, Siders HealthCare Consulting, Grand Forks, N.D.*

### Science of Safety: Fair and Just Culture; Reporting Culture

- Evaluate your organization's current culture on key aspects of a Fair and Just Culture.
- Define the concept of a Fair and Just Culture and how it applies to older adult services settings.
- State what a reporting culture is and why it is important.
- Describe how to create a culture of trust and the importance of speaking up as part of that culture.
- Explain the basics of a human factors approach to quality and safety.

*Christy Brinkman, Administrator, Essentia Health Oak Crossing, Detroit Lakes; and Julie Apold, PhD, Vice President of Quality and Performance Excellence, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis*

**Day 2: Thursday, Aug. 21, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

## Learning Culture (USER Model) and Root Cause Analysis

### U = Understanding the Problem to Be Solved

- Examine the role of a root cause analysis process to understand the key factors contributing to an adverse event or quality, safety, or process issue.
- Explore how to use root cause analysis processes proactively to strengthen your systems and prevent an error or system issue.
- List the steps in using a common cause approach to examine multiple similar events or issues.
- Apply strategies and tools to common real-life case study scenarios.

### Process Improvement Projects

- Define the components of the process improvement projects that individual participants will complete by the end of the Quality Specialist Certificate Program.
- List the five steps of a process improvement/quality improvement project.
- Apply a prioritization grid and quality improvement strategies to identify and prioritize process improvement projects for individual projects and to bring back project selection strategies to your organization.

### S = Strong Solutions

- Examine how to select strong solutions to address problems to be solved uncovered in a root cause analysis process.
- Apply solutions strategies to common real-life scenarios.
- Participate in a World Café approach to discover potential solutions and implementation strategies for key quality and safety topics, such as dietary safety, CPR issues, falls, medication errors, elopement, or change in condition.

*Cyndi Siders, RN, MSN, DFASHRM, CPHRM, CPPS, CWCA, Executive Consultant, Siders HealthCare Consulting, Grand Forks, N.D.; and Julie Apold, PhD, Vice President of Quality and Performance Excellence, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis*

# Program Schedule

## Session #2 – In-Person

Day 3: Wednesday, Oct. 1 • 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

### Data, Data, Data

#### Data to Drive Improvement Basics

- Describe data basics that drive data-informed decision making.
- Explain the foundations of an effective approach to data.
- Discuss how to go beyond the numbers by using real time information.
- Identify and apply metrics, data collection methods, and data displays and reports using common real-life case studies.

#### E = Evaluation; R = Revised as Needed

- Examine and apply different methods of evaluation.
- Discuss and develop a Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles for improvement.
- Define strategies and tips for sustainment of successful improvements.

*Jeff Bostic, Director of Data and Financial Policy and Julie Apold, PhD, Vice President of Quality and Performance Excellence, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis; Sandy Delgehausen, Regional Director of SNF Clinical Support/Metrics, Cassia, Edina ; and Jesse Noska, RN, LALD, Vice President of Clinical Quality, Progressive Care, Grand Rapids*

Day 4: Thursday, Oct. 2, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

### A Culture of Continuous Improvement

#### Performance Excellence

- Describe the components of an organizational excellence framework.
- Explain the importance of approach, deployment, learning, and integration (ADLI) in creating systematic, effective processes throughout your organization.
- Apply ADLI to one of your organization's processes and identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.

*Margie Millius, Performance Excellence Consultant, Elk River*

#### Systems and Processes

- Describe simple techniques to improve processes and workflow that can be applied to any process in your organization.
- Apply process strategies to common real-life case studies.

*Margie Millius, Performance Excellence Consultant, Elk River*

#### Sustaining an Engaged Workforce Through Cycles of Continuous Quality Improvement

- Describe the components of an effective employee engagement and retention strategy.
- Employ quality criteria from the Baldrige Leadership and Workforce categories to proactively improve the workplace experience of employees.
- Plan a systematic approach to creating and sustaining a culture of engagement.

*Cheryl Hill, Director of Engagement, Align, Wausau, Wis.*

## Session #3 – Virtual

Day 5: Wednesday, Nov. 5 • 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

### Quality Assurance Performance Improvement (QAPI)

#### Quality Management/QAPI Plan and Process

- Explain the of nursing home QAPI requirements and assisted living quality management requirements.
- Discuss leadership's role in QAPI/quality management.
- Create/strengthen your Quality Management/QAPI Plan and approach.

#### Practical Strategies to Apply Quality Management/QAPI in Your Organization

- Identify QAPI/quality management citations, requirements, and practical strategies for a successful QAPI/quality committee structure, agenda, meeting, and minutes.
- Examine and apply strategies for selecting, creating, monitoring, and sustaining Performance Improvement Projects (PIPs).
- Apply strategies to common real-life case studies.

*Cyndi Siders, RN, MSN, DFASHRM, CPHRM, CPPS, CWCA, Executive Consultant, Siders HealthCare Consulting, Grand Forks, N.D.; and Julie Apold, PhD, Vice President of Quality and Performance Excellence, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis*

Day 6: Thursday, Nov. 6, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

### Quality Assurance

#### OHFC - Preventing Abuse, Neglect, and Financial Exploitation

- Describe the role of the Office of Health Facility Complaints.
- Apply lessons learned from the program to prevent future adverse events in top categories of OHFC substantiated events through case studies and small group discussion.
- Evaluate strategies to prevent incidents of abuse through exercises, case studies, and small group discussions.

*Matthew Heffron JD, NREMT, State Rapid Response Operations Manager, Health Regulation Division, Office of Health Facility Complaints, Minnesota Department of Health, St. Paul; and Julie Apold, PhD, Vice President of Quality and Performance Excellence, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis*

#### Licensing Survey – Process Improvement to Prevent Survey Citations

- Describe the licensing survey process.
- Discuss top deficiencies, including IJs, Level 3s and 4s, and strategies to proactively address related processes and systems within your organization to prevent citations.

*Dr. Kari Everson, RN, LNHA, LALD, Vice President of Clinical Services, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis and President, EverCare Aging Services Consulting, St. Paul; Bobbie Guidry, LNHA, LALD, LSW, Vice President of Assisted Living and Adult Day Services, and Julie Apold, PhD, Vice President of Quality and Performance Excellence, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis*



# Program Schedule

## Session #4 – Virtual

Day 7: Wednesday, Dec. 3 • 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

### State and Federal Quality Programs

#### Nursing Home/Assisted Living Breakouts

##### Nursing Home Federal Quality Programs

- Summarize, at a detailed level, the federal quality measures and programs.
- Identify steps to effectively report and track quality program data and interpret reports.
- Discuss strategies to use quality program data to improve performance and outcomes.
- Assess your own quality measure reports to understand the data source and coding for various risk adjustments and exclusions that can impact your quality measures including Value-Based Purchasing, Quality Reporting Program, Care Compare, 5 Star Quality Rating System, and getting the most out of your MDS.

*Stephanie DeWees, BS, HSE, LNHA, LPN, IP, RAC-CT, Quality and Regulatory Specialist, LeadingAge Ohio, Columbus, Ohio and Business Owner, Squared Business Solutions, Columbus, Ohio*

##### Assisted Living Federal Quality Programs

- Summarize, at a detailed level, the future of quality in assisted living at the federal level.
- Explain the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Settings Rule.
- Discuss assisted living licensing survey and citations, including food code, emergency preparedness, and life safety citations.

*Janine Finck-Boyle, MBA/HCA, LNHA, Vice President, Health Policy and Regulatory Affairs, LeadingAge, Washington, D.C.; Bobbie Guidry, LNHA, LALD, LSW, Vice President of Assisted Living and Adult Day Services, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis; Dawn Nickleson, CDM, CFPP, Pastry Chef, Owner, Passion for Dining and Nutrition, Cottage Grove; and Shanna Swanson, Consultant, Bloomington*

##### Nursing Home State Quality Measures and Programs

- Summarize, at a detailed level, Minnesota's quality measures and programs.
- Identify the steps to successfully participate in QIIP and PIPP pay for performance.
- Identify important features of the Civil Monetary Penalty (CMP) Initiative funds.

##### Topics:

- **Value-Based Reimbursement (VBR)** – Jeff Bostic, Director of Data and Financial Policy, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis
- **Understanding the State Reports** – Teresa Lewis, Nursing Facility Rates and Policy Division, Department of Human Services, Minneapolis

##### Topics *cont'd.*

- **PIPP/QIIP Programs** – Teresa Lewis, Nursing Facility Rates and Policy Division, Department of Human Services, Minneapolis
- **CMP Program** – Munna Yasiri, Compliance and Intergovernmental Regulations Director, Nursing Facility Rates and Policy Division, Minnesota Department of Human Services, St. Paul

##### Assisted Living State Quality Measures and Programs

- Describe the metrics included in and current implementation status of Minnesota's Assisted Living Report Card.
- Discuss the activities of the Home Care/Assisted Living Advisory Group.

##### Topics:

- **State Assisted Living Report Card** – *Speaker to be announced.*
- **LeadingAge Minnesota Data Portal Assisted Living Quality Data** – Jeff Bostic, Director of Data and Financial Policy, and Julie Apold, PhD, Vice President of Quality and Performance Excellence, LeadingAge Minnesota, Minneapolis
- **Home Care/Assisted Living Advisory Group** – Anna Petersmeyer, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Vista Prairie Communities, Champlin

##### Bringing It All Together

- Evaluate strategies and tips for how to manage the data, reports, and programs to successfully prioritize improvement opportunities and drive sustained improvement.

*Sandy Delgehausen, Regional Director of SNF Clinical Support/Metrics, Cassia, Edina; and Jesse Noska, RN, LALD, Vice President of Clinical Quality, Progressive Care, Grand Rapids*

## Day 8: Thursday, Dec. 4, 9 a.m. – Noon

### Wrap-up and Presentation of Quality Improvement Projects

##### Small Group Discussion

- Discuss strategies and lessons learned throughout the program.
  - » What have you learned and applied in your organization?
  - » What are you planning to begin/change in your quality program?
  - » What questions do you still have for your colleagues?
  - » What feedback do you have for future training programs?

##### Quality Improvement Project Presentations

- Presentation of Quality Improvement Projects by program participants.