



PQA

## HEALTHCARE QUALITY INNOVATION CHALLENGE

### COMPETITION DETAILS

#### Purpose

The PQA Healthcare Quality Innovation Challenge is designed to promote student engagement in leveraging technology to create realistic solutions that improve healthcare quality measurement.

#### Summary

- Students will respond to current healthcare quality challenges provided in the form of 3 prompts posted on the website each August.
- Teams will choose 1 prompt from the 3 provided for which they will develop a business summary proposal for their technology-driven solution.
- Proposal review and selection of the top 3 finalists will be conducted by an external review board composed of individuals from across PQA's diverse membership (e.g., health plans, health information technology companies, community pharmacies, PBMs).
- The top 3 teams selected as finalists will pitch their proposal to a panel of judges from across PQA's membership at the PQA Annual Meeting each May.

#### Key Opportunities

Students will have an opportunity to:

- Learn how innovation and technology can impact healthcare quality and performance measurement; and
- Apply that knowledge as well as develop business and entrepreneurial skills by working collaboratively to create an innovative solution.

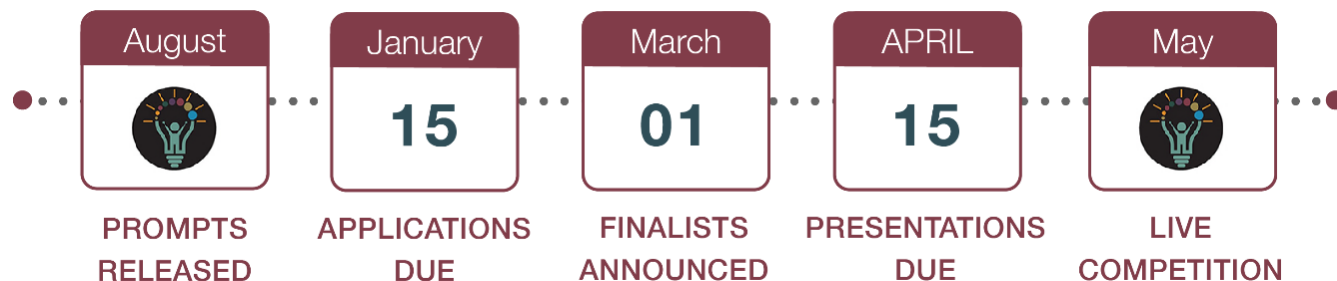
PQA will have the opportunity to:

- Actively support ideas that help organizations achieve excellence on performance measures and optimize patient outcomes

#### Eligibility Requirements

- Teams can be from any school or college of pharmacy, regardless of PQA membership status.
- Teams must be composed of at least 2 and no more than 4 students total. Teams must have at least 1 pharmacy student. Teams may consider an interprofessional approach (e.g., medical, business, engineering, computer science), but this is not required.
- Eligible students must be enrolled full-time or part-time in a degree-seeking program.
- Each team must have 1 team advisor from their University/College or from a PQA member organization.
- If selected as finalists, at least 2 team members must be able to attend the PQA Annual Meeting in May to present.

## Competition Timeline



## Application

An online application link will be released each Fall. Students will be required to provide the following information:

- Descriptive Project Title
- Selected Prompt
- College/University Name
- Team Captain – Name, Year, Program, Email, Phone
- Additional Team Members – Name, Year, Program, Email, Phone
- Team Advisor – Name, Title, Organization, Email
- PDF upload of College/University approval of participation (a letter from the Team Advisor confirming the institution’s approval of the Team’s participation and support for travel to the PQA Annual Meeting, if the Team is selected as a finalist)
- PDF upload of the business summary proposal (12 pages maximum) that includes the following components: Executive Summary, Description of Problem (including available evidence/data), Description of Solution, Implementation Strategy, Financial Projections (cost to develop and/or implement and ROI), Market Analysis, Marketing Plan, Potential Challenges and Solutions

## Evaluation Criteria

- Proposals will be evaluated to identify the top 3 finalists. Reviewers will assess proposals for completeness and quality, inclusive of each required section listed above. Reviewers will also evaluate logic, clarity, creativity, feasibility, and potential impact of solution.
- The Annual Meeting judging panel will evaluate the top 3 finalists based solely on presentation effectiveness and Q&A responses. The audience will be asked to select their favorite proposal, and this vote will be factored in as a small portion of the team’s final score.

## Award Description

Members of the 3 finalist teams will receive complementary registration, as well as travel and lodging (up to \$750 per team) for the 2021 PQA Annual Meeting. Awards will be split among the students on each team as follows:

- First Place: \$5,000
- Second Place: \$3,500
- Third Place: \$1,500

*Questions about the competition can be emailed to [Academics@PQAalliance.org](mailto:Academics@PQAalliance.org).  
Visit PQA’s [Student Programs](#) web page for more information.*

# 2020 PQA Healthcare Quality Innovation Challenge

## PROMPT DETAILS

### 1. Pandemics in pharmacies

*Pharmacies are accessible and essential places to receive healthcare, which became clear to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the pandemic, pharmacies adopted numerous policies and strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This helped pharmacies protect their workers and patients while remaining open. During a pandemic, it is clear that ensuring social distancing and minimizing contact points with patients and pharmacy staff is crucial.*

*Develop a technology driven solution that optimizes efficiency and safety in implementing a contactless pharmacy operation during a pandemic.*

### 2. Mental health in patients

Mental illness affects one in five adults in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Mental illness creates a ripple effect in many aspects of life, including cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, substance abuse, unemployment, dropping out of school, and incarceration. Screening, referral, diagnosis and treatment of mental illness is critical to a patient's health and wellbeing.

*Develop a technology driven solution that connects patients to mental health resources after assessing a patient's risk for mental illness. Potential disorders to address include but are not limited to mood disorders, anxiety disorders, substance abuse, eating disorders, and others.*

### 3. Bridging gaps in healthcare

Social determinants of health (SDOH) affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. SDOH are classified into five domains: Economic Stability, Education, Health and Health Care, Neighborhood and Built Environment, and Social and Community Context.<sup>2</sup> Racial or ethnic minority groups are disproportionately impacted by these factors and they experience consistently lower socioeconomic status.<sup>3</sup>

*Develop a technology driven solution that identifies and addresses a patient's health disparities based on SDOH or low social and economic status.*

**Teams are encouraged to take an interprofessional approach and leverage diverse disciplines (e.g., medical, business, engineering, computer science) to develop solutions.**

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<sup>1</sup> Mental Health by the Numbers [Internet]. NAMI. Available from: <https://www.nami.org/mhstats>

<sup>2</sup> National Center for Health Statistics. Chapter 39: Social Determinants of Health. Healthy People 2020 Midcourse Review. Hyattsville, MD. 2016. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hpdata2020/HP2020MCR-C39-SDOH.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Flaskerud, J. H., & DeLilly, C. R. (2012). Social determinants of health status. *Issues in mental health nursing*, 33(7), 494–497. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3710744/>

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is a business summary proposal?**

For the purposes of this competition, a business summary proposal is less detailed than a full business plan and should contain the components listed in the application section.

### **Are teams permitted to discuss and receive input from professors or other healthcare professionals?**

Ideas should be student-generated; however, discussion with professors and/or other professionals is encouraged.

### **Is there a requirement for the length of the business summary?**

The business summary should be no more than 12 pages. The plan should effectively and efficiently communicate the team's ideas in each of the required sections.

### **Who can serve as a team advisor?**

Faculty from student schools or individuals from PQA member organizations can serve as team advisors.

### **How can I find out what organizations are members of PQA?**

A list of PQA member organizations can be found here: <https://pqaalliance.org/membership/organizations.asp>.

### **How can my school become a PQA member?**

The PQA membership application and more information can be found here: <http://pqaalliance.org/membership/application.asp>.

### **Who can I contact if I cannot find a team advisor?**

Please reach out to PQA if you need assistance connecting with an advisor.

### **What is a technology-driven solution?**

We are looking for ideas that leverage existing technology in an innovative way, improve or add to existing technology, and/or create a new technology that can improve healthcare quality. Examples include, but are not limited to, applications, cloud-based solutions, big data solutions, wearable technology, and EMR/EHR solutions.

### **What resources are available to help students understand healthcare quality and the prompts?**

Resources include the PQA website and government websites. We encourage teams to do more research into the scenarios described in the prompts and technology-based solutions currently being used. Please note any assumption(s) made in the appropriate section of the business summary proposal.

### **How can I find out more information about the presentation portion of the competition?**

The primary contact and team advisor for the top three teams will be notified and provided additional presentation details each Spring after the top 3 finalists have been identified.

### **Are my ideas confidential?**

Submitted business summary proposals are distributed to various individuals from PQA member organizations for evaluation. The 3 teams selected for the final competition will pitch their solution to a panel of judges and an audience of approximately 500 individuals from PQA member and non-member organizations. Protection of any proprietary materials is the sole responsibility of the participating team. We encourage teams to reach out to their schools as resources, if necessary. There will no recording or photography allowed during the final presentations.