



Christine Nidd, MSW CPHQ PMP

Manager of Quality and Compliance, Hospice of the Northwest, Mount Vernon, WA

Christine Nidd's experiences as a volunteer candy striper and a healthcare aide at a nursing home gave her important insights for her future career in quality and compliance. As a high-school student in Canada, she enjoyed working with the elderly and recognized that staff morale directly affected the care given. When Nidd became a nursing home administrator at just 25 years old, she created a staff peer recognition program, staff-driven in-service education, flexible scheduling, and job sharing, improving staff satisfaction, reducing sick time and grievances, and improving resident and family satisfaction ratings. Her hard work was rewarded as she advanced to serve as a regional director and then vice president of operations, overseeing 35 facilities including nursing homes and assisted-living and retirement centers.

Nidd discovered how vastly different the two healthcare systems were when she moved from Canada to the United States. In Canada, where healthcare is publicly funded, facilities don't compete for patients. Nidd needed to develop new skills and took a job giving her oversight of six skilled nursing and rehab facilities. She managed the activities that ensured compliance with regulatory requirements, including ongoing quality assurance and process improvement activities and preparation and participation in inspections/surveys from regulatory and accreditation agencies.

She thrived in that role and today is the manager of quality and compliance for a joint venture hospice. She oversees all quality activities for the hospice with input from an interdisciplinary hospice team. She spearheaded efforts to successfully secure the organization's first accreditation with deemed status through Community Health Accreditation Partners (CHAP). All 65 hospice employees rose to the challenge of becoming part of the culture of continued readiness and shared in the accomplishment of accreditation.

COMPETENCIES FOR THE HQP

"Being a member of the work group that developed the regulatory and accreditation competencies was exciting and challenging,"

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Nidd says. "It was a great opportunity for me to learn from my peers. The work forced us to really think clearly and systematically about what we do. We often don't think about what we do; we just do it." The stimulating discussions expanded her thinking. "It was not easy to think outside my hospice and long-term-care settings," Nidd says. "This competencies work will help me as I prepare for new regulations including those that will require collaboration across different clinical settings."

The *Q Essentials Competencies* help advance healthcare quality professionals' (HQPs) careers, Nidd says. They are relevant for everyone, from people who are just entering the healthcare quality field to experienced professionals who want to explore other areas of quality.

A lifelong learner, Nidd is passionate about improving quality. She continuously learns on the job, takes courses, reads journals, and participates on the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization Quality and Standards Committee.

"NAHQ is our industry leader. NAHQ keeps us current on trends through its educational offerings and publications," Nidd says. She praises the Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality® (CPHQ) as a single platform to confirm that individuals have a base of knowledge and the tools necessary for practice. "NAHQ, CPHQ, and Q Essentials show a commitment to continuous improvement. They help move our industry forward and show a personal commitment to improving quality."

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ACCREDITATION**