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QualiNav | HEARTLAND INTELLICARE

QualiNav Pillars

Workforce

QualiNav functions as a "fractional workforce" that mitigates burnout and automates administrative tasks, directly supporting the RHTP's goal to enhance the supply of clinicians and recruit and retain talent by reducing the strain on rural staff.

Improved Outcomes

The platform's predictive analytics and specific modules for improving adherence to evidence based best practices align with RHTP's mandate to improve health care outcomes for rural residents by prioritizing prevention and using data to furnish high-quality care close to home.

AI Enabled Technology

QualiNav fulfills the RHTP's specific request for technical assistance in adopting "artificial intelligence" and software solutions that improve efficiency and care delivery in rural hospitals.

Sustainability

By reducing labor costs and preventing turnover expenses, QualiNav provides the "robust sustainability plan" required for prioritized review, helping hospitals manage long-term financial solvency and avoid the risk of closure.

Introduction

Rural communities spread across vast geographic areas often contend with persistent shortages in the workforce and economic constraints. These pressures are intensified by the closure of the limited rural hospitals that exist. Together, these factors create an environment where residents struggle to receive timely, high-quality, and consistent care—highlighting the urgent need for targeted investments, innovation, and collaborative solutions to strengthen rural health systems.

Heartland Intellicare is redefining what it means to deliver high-quality support to rural patients and community-based health systems by pairing **human-centered solutions with the right blend of technology.** Built on the belief that meaningful change starts with understanding people—their workflows, challenges, and lived experiences—Heartland Intellicare bridges the gap between frontline realities and modern innovation. Our approach prioritizes empathy and practical problem-solving, then enhances it with intelligent tools that drive efficiency, improve decision-making, and free teams to focus on what matters most: delivering exceptional patient care. With Heartland Intellicare, smarter systems don't replace the human touch—they elevate it.

Our Mission

Make Rural America Healthy Again.

At Heartland Intellicare we believe that every patient deserves the highest standard of care—no matter where they live. Our mission is to transform rural healthcare by delivering cutting-edge AI technology that supports quality improvement, regulatory compliance, and patient safety. We are dedicated to helping small and critical access hospitals "do more with less," so healthcare professionals can focus on what matters most: patient care.

Our Approach

Heartland Intellicare's team embraces human-centered design thinking and methodologies. Since the inception of QualiNav development, our team has consistently engaged with rural hospital stakeholders to build a platform that is not just another AI tool, but designed with the specific needs and concerns of rural hospital quality leaders. Our motto is "Nothing about hospital quality leaders, without hospital quality leaders." We believe that by engaging end users in the design process, we can build a platform that serves many needs of rural hospitals.

The Critical Challenges

Rural hospitals and clinics are lifelines for their communities but face accelerating challenges: persistent workforce shortages, high turnover in key quality roles resulting in gaps in knowledge and training, heavy administrative burden, and mounting compliance risks. Traditional technical assistance helps in bursts but rarely builds durable local capacity. Rural communities require a highly reliable and resilient quality system to eliminate crisis-driven compliance. They need to be able to focus on the critical tasks of patient safety and quality compliance.

1. Isolation, Burnout & Lack of Real-Time Guidance

Rural quality teams often work in professional isolation, facing complex regulatory decisions without mentorship or peer support. This drives burnout, turnover, and inconsistent application of best practices.

2. Workforce Gaps & Loss of Expertise

The "Department of One" model found in many rural hospitals forces Quality Directors to shoulder multiple critical responsibilities without formal training or structured onboarding. High turnover causes institutional knowledge to evaporate, setting hospitals back years.

3. Reactive Compliance & Survey Vulnerability

Rural hospitals are often forced out of necessity to operate in a cycle of crisis-driven compliance, preparing for surveys only when deadlines loom. Limited tools for monitoring readiness lead to preventable accreditation issues and financial penalties.

4. Manual Data Burden & Limited Analytics

Quality leaders spend the majority of their day on manual data entry, spreadsheet management, and chasing information across departments. These outdated processes hinder trend detection and delay corrective action, both of which are necessary for improving patient outcomes.

5. Fragmented Systems & Outdated Policies

Rural hospitals struggle with scattered documents, outdated policies, and rapidly changing regulations. Without centralized systems or consistent updates, even small gaps create significant compliance risk.

The Solution: QualiNav

Heartland Intellicare is proud to introduce **QualiNav**, a Quality Navigation companion for rural healthcare teams.

QualiNav is an AI-powered support tool designed to help navigate the growing demands of quality, compliance, and patient safety with confidence. Built to simplify complex tasks, streamline documentation, and provide real-time guidance, QualiNav gives overstretched "departments of one" the expert backup they've never had. By combining accessible intelligence with rural-focused design, it empowers hospitals to work smarter, stay survey-ready, and elevate care—without adding staff or increasing workload.

Core Capabilities Highlights:

Heartland Intellicare aims to transform rural healthcare from a state of "crisis-driven compliance" to highly reliable, sustainable systems.

AI-Driven Automation: Automates up to 60% of routine tasks, freeing up 4–6 hours per day for leaders to focus on patient safety rather than paperwork.

Virtual Mentorship: Provides daily professional development, AI-guided quality "roadmaps," and gamified learning to upskill staff and replace "trial by error" with expert best practices.

The Quality Lab: Breaks down rural isolation by connecting leaders into a statewide peer network to share resources, solutions, and support.

Predictive Dashboards and Analysis: Replaces broken Excel trackers with real-time data collection and analytics that identify risks before they become patient harms or penalties.

SCOUT, AI Chatbot: Our Systems, Compliance & Operations Utility Tool (SCOUT) serves as an always-available companion delivering clear answers, reliable direction, and quick access to essential information.

Policy and Procedures: Ensure your guidelines are updated with evidence-based practices and are consistent among the organization. Utilize high-reliability principles to reduce patient errors and strengthen operations and outcomes.

Compliance readiness: Centralizes standards, tracks key quality and safety indicators in real time, flags gaps, and guides teams through mock survey preparation and documentation.

Quality improvement projects: Provides evidence-based improvement project ideas and builds out data tracking, project management, and sustainability plans.

Customized assessments: Uses tailored individual and organization-wide assessments to pinpoint needs, customize guidance, and align support with each hospital's unique priorities.

Strategic Goals & Impact

Financial Resilience: By ensuring 90%+ compliance rates, hospitals avoid costly penalties and stabilize their bottom line, preventing closures.

Reduction in Administrative Burden: Documented decrease of approximately 60% time spent on manual quality reporting and compliance tasks, enabling quality directors to redirect efforts toward patient safety and care coordination.

Improved Patient Safety and Quality Metrics: Statistically significant gains across targeted indicators (e.g., readmissions, infection control, chronic disease management) tracked through platform dashboards.

Democratized Expertise: Ensures that every rural hospital, regardless of size or location, has access to expert-level quality management systems

Sustainable Peer-Learning Networks: Assess at the county and State level the formation and continuation of statewide peer-to-peer mentorship and learning collaboratives.

Increased Workforce Satisfaction: Positive shifts in staff satisfaction and engagement, measured through standardized surveys, reducing burnout and reinforcing organizational capacity.

The Solution: grapevine

QualiNav is built on the robust and proven Grapevine platform. Grapevine provides the underlying architecture that enables QualiNav's core mission of unlocking time, improving quality, and building relationships.

Here is a breakdown of Grapevine's key credentials and technical foundations:

- **Proven Track Record:** Grapevine is not a new, untested system; it benefits from 7 years of evolution and refinement.
- **Broad Deployment:** The platform has been successfully deployed across more than 40 distinct instances, demonstrating its adaptability to different organizational needs.
- **Scale and Reach:** It currently supports a massive user base of over 100,000 global users, with a strong presence skewed toward North America.
- **Flexible & Secure Architecture:** The front-end and content management rely on WordPress, chosen specifically to provide scale, flexibility, and security.
- **Advanced AI Capabilities:** The platform's advanced features—such as your "Scout" thought partner—are driven by a powerful Google Vertex AI backplane.

By leveraging Grapevine, QualiNav isn't just a conceptual dashboard; it is backed by a mature, highly scalable, and secure enterprise architecture capable of supporting diverse, customized portal interfaces.

QualiNav: The AI-Enabled Rural Quality Operating System

Smart technology for quality excellence.

QualiNav, developed by Heartland Intellicare, is a cloud-based, AI-enabled quality management platform purpose-built for the unique challenges of rural and Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs). It combines automation, predictive analytics, and virtual mentorship to transform how rural hospitals manage patient safety and compliance.

QualiNav is not just a software tool; it is a capacity-building initiative. By combining human-centered design with AI technology, it ensures that rural hospitals—regardless of their size or resources—can deliver high-quality, safe care.

The Features of QualiNav

Welcome to QualiNav. The Operating System for rural Quality Directors. This enterprise software will act as a thought partner and connector to a network of your peers within the state. This comprehensive system with more than 30 features serves to give you the knowledge, automation and collaboration you need to enhance health outcomes and give you back time to spend with patients and colleagues.

32 Key Features

Town Square
Homepage which provides timely information to users curated in partnership with state partners
- State News
- Patient Safety News
- Dynamic Billboard
- Federal News
- Quick Link to frequent use

Scout
Your trusted (AI driven) thought partner
- AI Enabled Chatbot
- Scout Suggests
- Curated Brain
- Personal Think Tank
- Converse across all features
- Policy Analysis

My Space
Your Personal dashboard for support & challenge
- My Commitments
- My Data
- My Workflow
- My QI Projects

My Org
Team zone to create value, efficiency and collaboration within your organization
- Quality Dashboard
- Org Assessments
- Run Charts
- Readiness Assessments
- QI Projects

Quality Lab
Looking outside of your Org for external inspiration and relationship building
- Programming Network
- The Library
- Peer to Peer Network
- The Leaderboard

Recharge
Center yourself, learn in a gamified way and lift up your team
- Wellbeing
- Community
- Games & Quizzes

Engagement
All the data from QualiNav at your fingertips in real time
- Engagement Metrics
- CMS Report Ready Real Time Data
- Community Management
- Engagement Modelling
- Data Driven Campaigns

1. Town Square (The Newsfeed)

Town Square Homepage which provides timely information to users curated in partnership with state partners

- State News
- Patient Safety News
- Federal New
- Dynamic Billboard
- Quick Link to frequent use

In rural healthcare, staying ahead of rapidly changing guidelines and news is essential. Town Square serves as the QualiNav homepage, providing timely information to users that is carefully curated in partnership with state partners.

- **Dynamic Billboard:** Ensure vital information is seen immediately. This feature allows you to choose exactly what news you want to push to end users.
- **State News:** Stay locally connected by receiving timely news within your state.
- **Federal News:** Keep a pulse on national shifts with timely news out of DC.
- **Patient Safety News:** Elevate your quality of care with new updates for evidence-based practices.

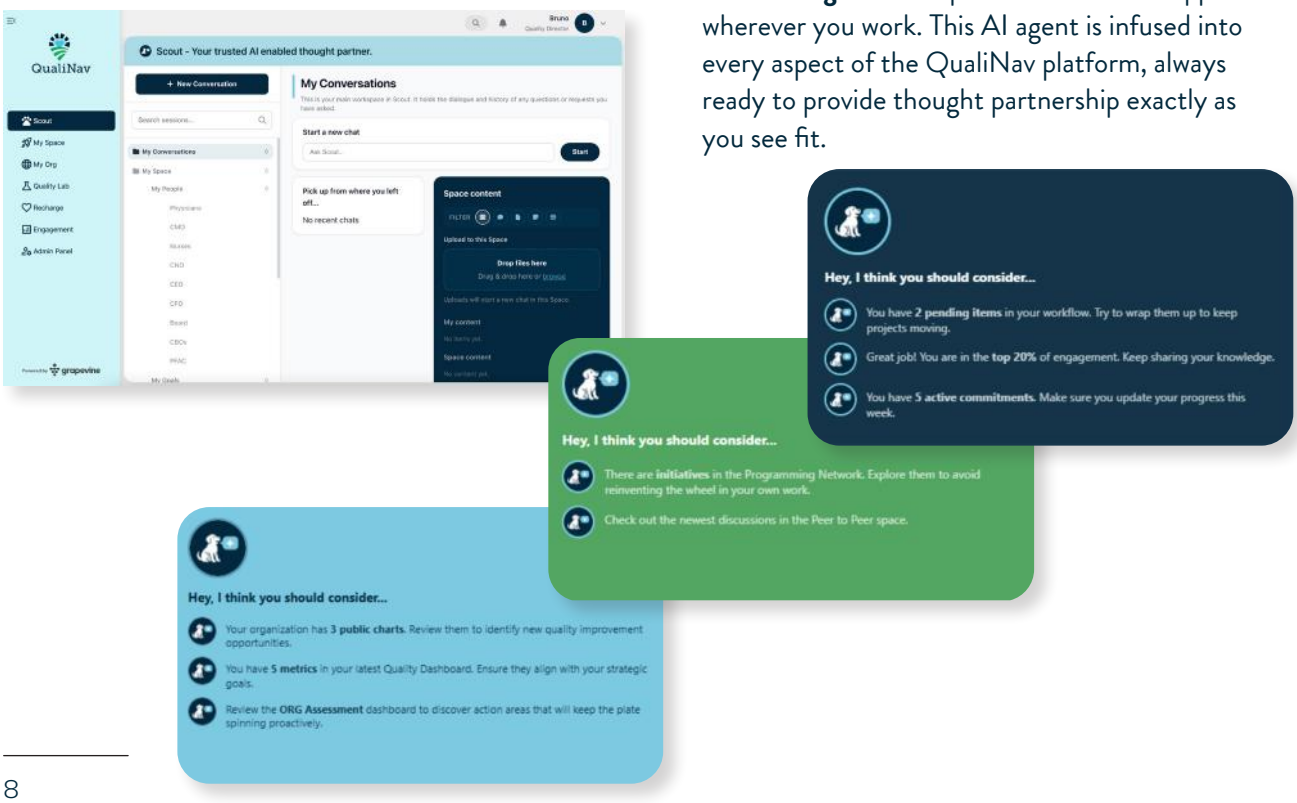
2. Scout (AI Enabled Thought Partner)

Scout Your trusted (AI driven) thought partner

- AI Enabled Chatbot
- Curated Brain
- Converse across all features
- Scout Suggests
- Personal Think Tank
- Policy Analysis

SCOUT is your always-available systems, compliance, and operations utility tool, built to simplify your day and support your toughest decisions. Your trusted companion and thought partner bringing value.

- **Instant Answers:** Ask SCOUT anything—from interpreting data charts to understanding new regulations or deciding which tasks to prioritize.
- **Operational Clarity:** Helps you plan your day, solve problems, and eliminate administrative clutter so you can stay focused on patient care.
- **Reliable Direction:** A consistent, evidence-based companion that ensures accuracy even when staff capacity is limited.
- **AI Enabled Chatbot:** Get immediate support for any queries you might have. Scout delivers answers that are carefully sourced from a dedicated "brain" of trusted information.
- **Think Tank:** Leverage an AI synthesizer to make sense of complex challenges. Scout pulls together vast amounts of information, acting as a collaborative thought partner across all aspects of your demanding role.
- **Scout Integration:** Experience seamless support wherever you work. This AI agent is infused into every aspect of the QualiNav platform, always ready to provide thought partnership exactly as you see fit.

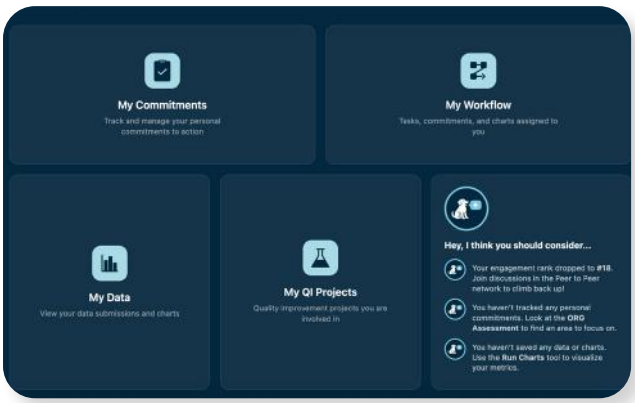


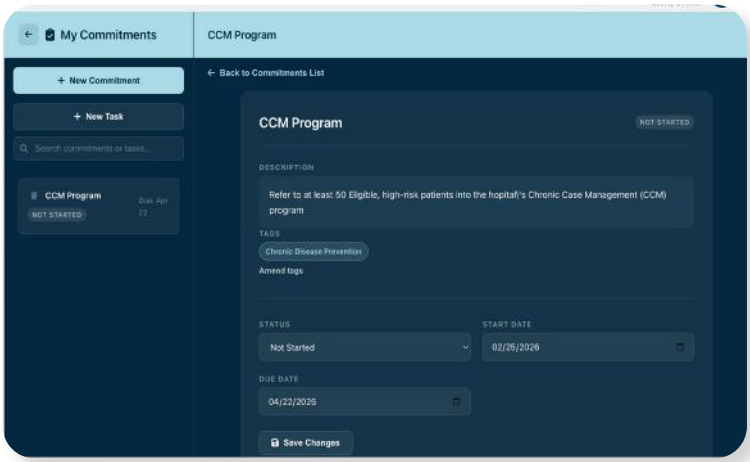
3. My Space (Accountability & Automation)

My Space Your Personal dashboard for support & challenge

- My Commitments
- My Workflow
- My Data
- My QI Projects

Rural quality directors wear many hats, making it critical to cut through the noise and prioritize their day. **My Space** is your customized, personal dashboard designed specifically to keep you on task, focused, and in control of your daily operations.





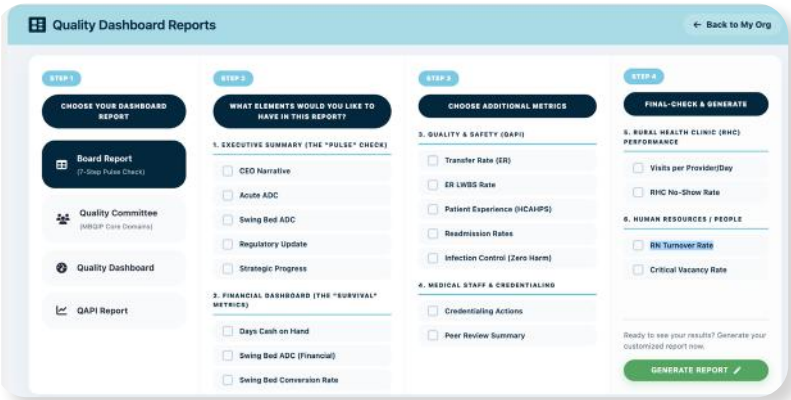
- **My Commitments:** Never let an action item fall through the cracks. Easily track and manage your personal commitments to action, ensuring follow-through on your most critical tasks.
- **My Workflow:** Streamline your day-to-day operations. This dedicated module allows you to organize, track, and manage your "jobs to be done" so you always know what needs your attention next.
- **My Data:** Turn numbers into narrative. Instantly view your data submissions and visualize trends through intuitive charts, keeping essential metrics right at your fingertips.
- **My QI Projects:** Drive continuous advancement. Centrally track, monitor, and manage all your ongoing quality improvement projects to ensure your initiatives are hitting their milestones.

4. My Org (Quality Improvement & Collaboration)

My Org Team zone to create value, efficiency and collaboration within your organization

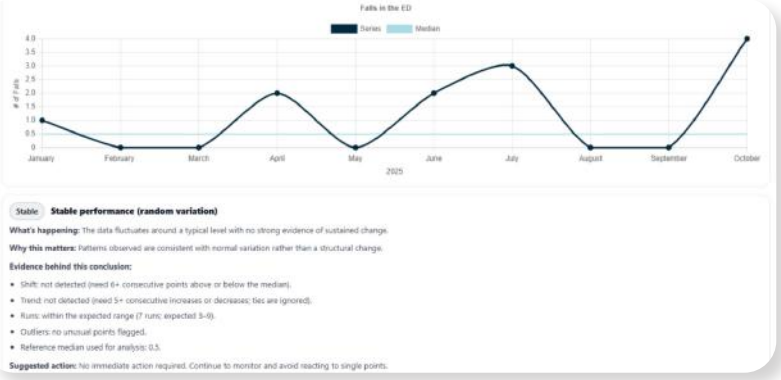
- Quality Dashboard
- Org Assessments
- Run Charts
- Readiness Assessments
- QI Projects

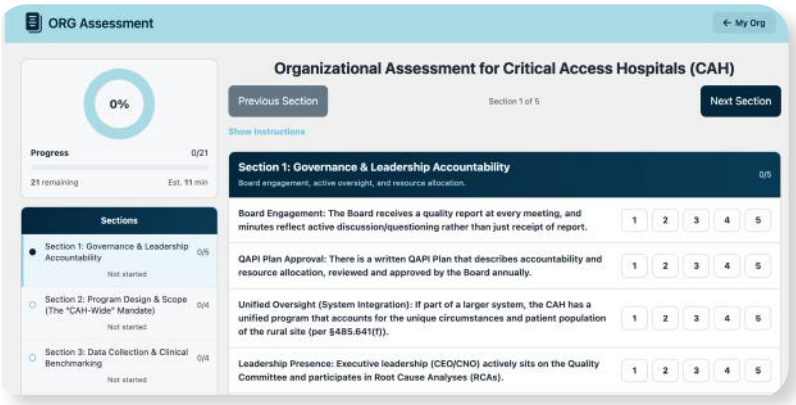
In rural healthcare, creating systemic value requires seamless teamwork and clear communication. **My Org** is your dedicated collaborative hub—a space designed specifically to foster alignment, drive efficiency, and build a culture of continuous improvement across your facility.



- **Quality Dashboard Reports:** Communicate impact effortlessly. Create timely, polished, and visually appealing reports that present pertinent data to your stakeholders in an accessible format.

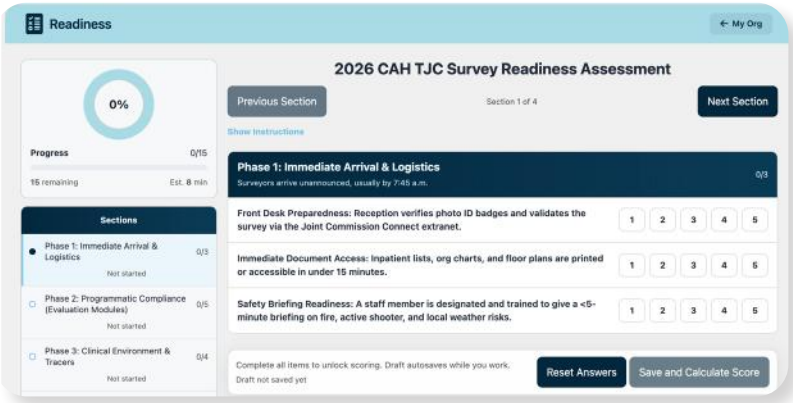
+ **Run Charts:** Your comprehensive hub for real time analytics. Use this one-stop shop for run chart creation to analyze data in a functional workspace, or publish charts and tag colleagues to keep everyone informed.

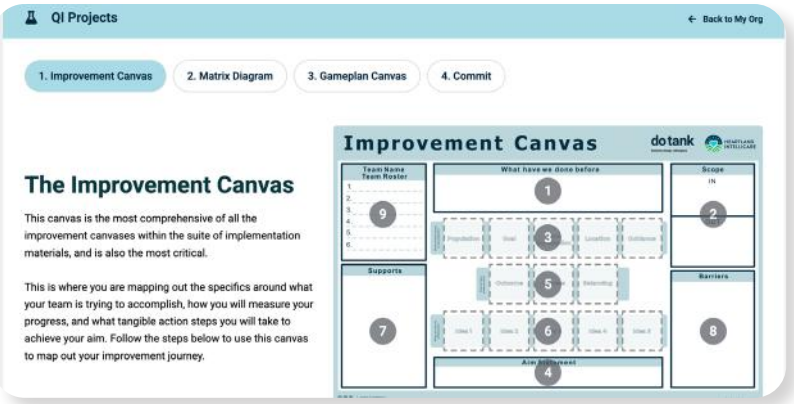




+ **Org Assessments:** Gain a holistic view of your facility. Engage in broad, systemic evaluations to comprehensively assess your organization's culture, leadership, finance, and operations.

+ **Readiness Assessments:** Prepare for focused success. Utilize narrow, targeted assessments to evaluate the specific resources, skills, and buy-in required before launching a single, specific initiative.





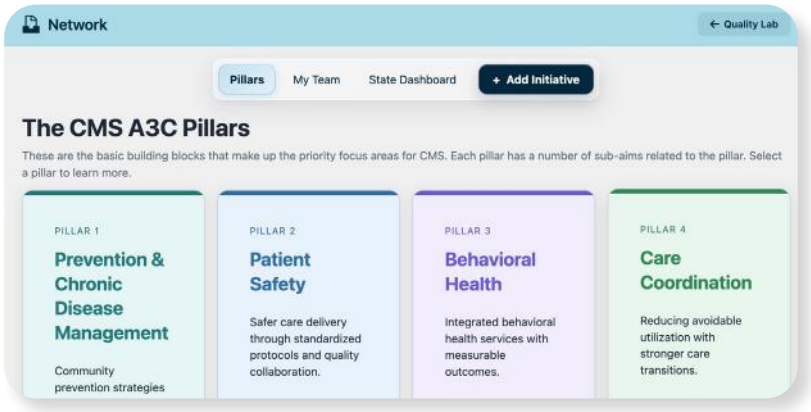
+ **QI Projects:** Bring your vision to life. Use this collaborative space to properly frame out your quality improvement projects and ensure your entire team is aligned for execution.

5. Quality Lab (Networking & On-Demand Resources)

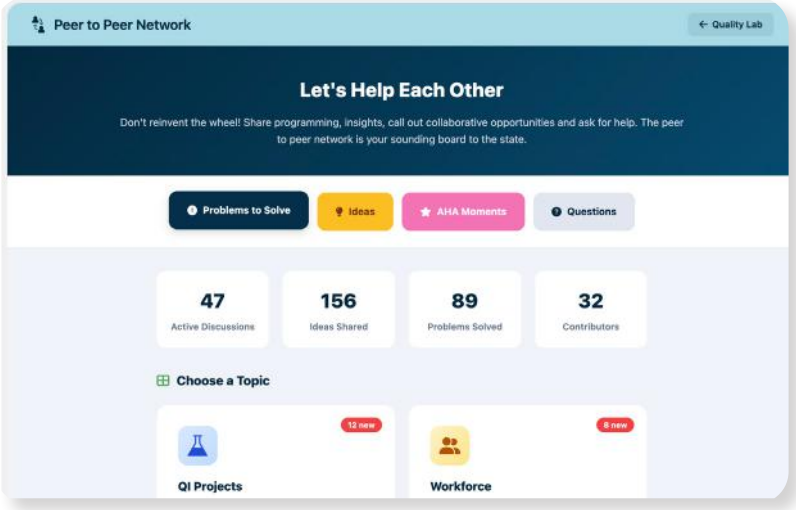
Quality Lab Looking outside of your Org for external inspiration and relationship building

- **Programming Network**
- **The Library**
- **Peer to Peer Network**
- **The Leaderboard**

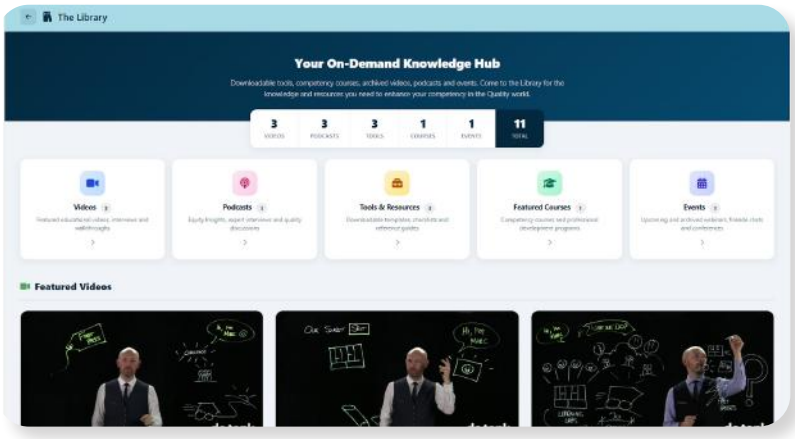
Navigating the demands of healthcare quality improvement requires a strong community. **The Quality Lab** is a dedicated peer-to-peer space designed specifically to empower hospital quality leaders. Here, you can connect, exchange practical solutions, and rely on peer expertise to navigate the complex demands of your role.



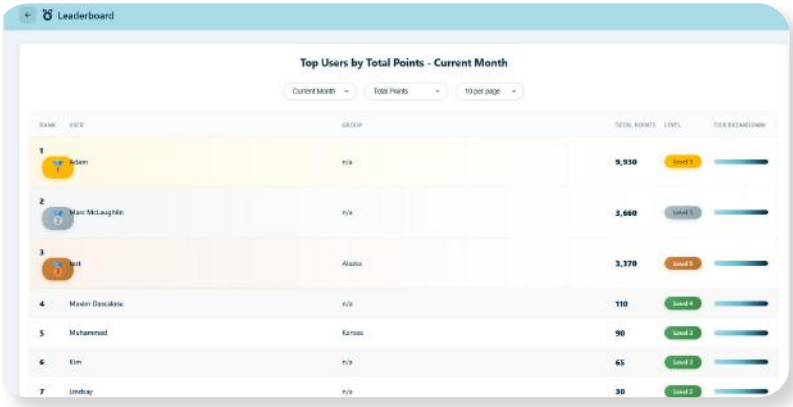
- **Programming Network:** Ensure your state never has to reinvent the wheel. This statewide programming repository allows you to share and collaborate as you work together to enhance outcomes.



- **Peer to Peer Network:** Leave outdated list servs in the past and use this network as your sounding board to the state. This is the modern place to pose questions to other Quality Directors, discuss hot topics, solve problems, and share ideas or learnings.



- **The Library:** Access a one-stop shop for on-demand content and events. Dive into downloadable tools, compeatency courses, archived videos, and podcasts to enhance your competency in the Quality world.



+ **The Leaderboard:** Track how you and your organization are faring from an engagement perspective. Climb to the top of the leaderboards to unlock access to professional development opportunities and experiences that enhance your personal quality journey!

6. Recharge (Wellbeing & Games)

Recharge Center yourself, learn in a gamified way and lift up your team

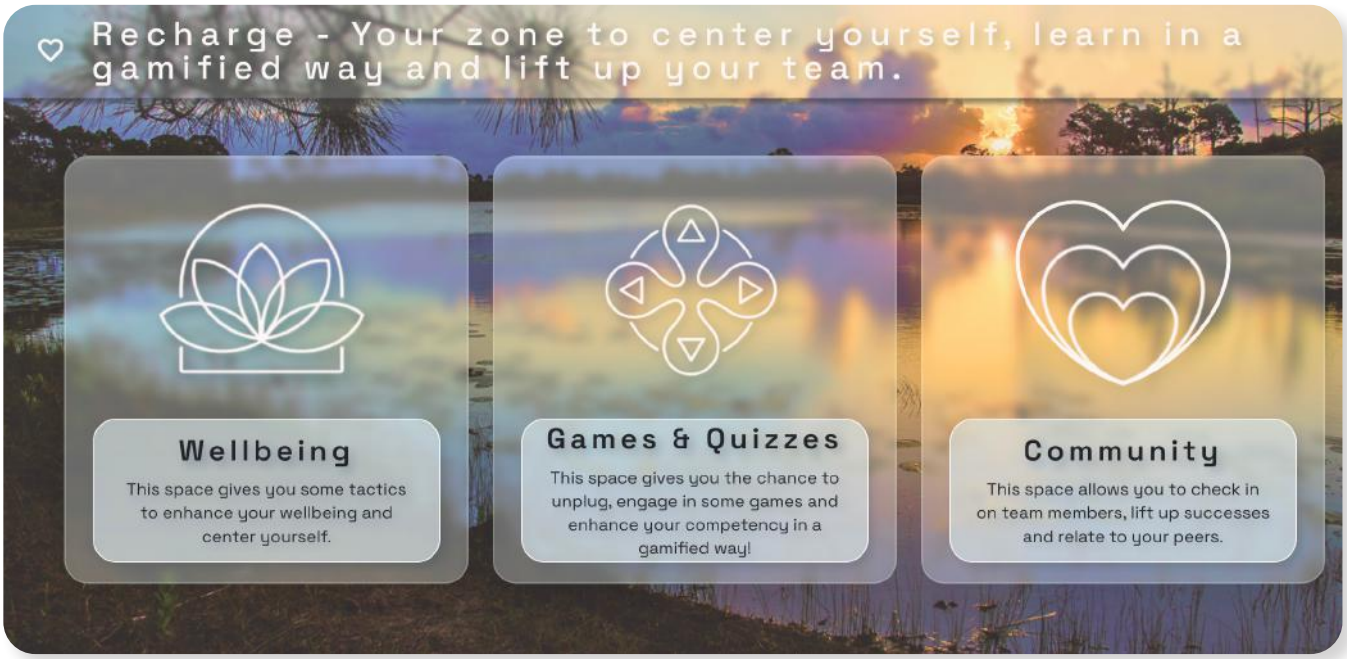
- **Wellbeing**
- **Games & Quizzes**
- **Community**

Leading quality improvement initiatives in rural healthcare is demanding work that requires resilience. **Recharge** is your dedicated zone to center yourself, learn in a gamified way, and lift up your team.

+ **Wellbeing:** Take a moment to breathe. This space gives you actionable tactics to enhance your wellbeing and center yourself amidst a busy schedule.

+ **Games & Quizzes:** Step back and recharge your mental batteries. This space gives you the chance to unplug, engage in some games, and enhance your competency in a fun, gamified way!

+ **Community:** Foster a culture of support. This dedicated space allows you to check in on team members, lift up their successes, and relate to your peers.

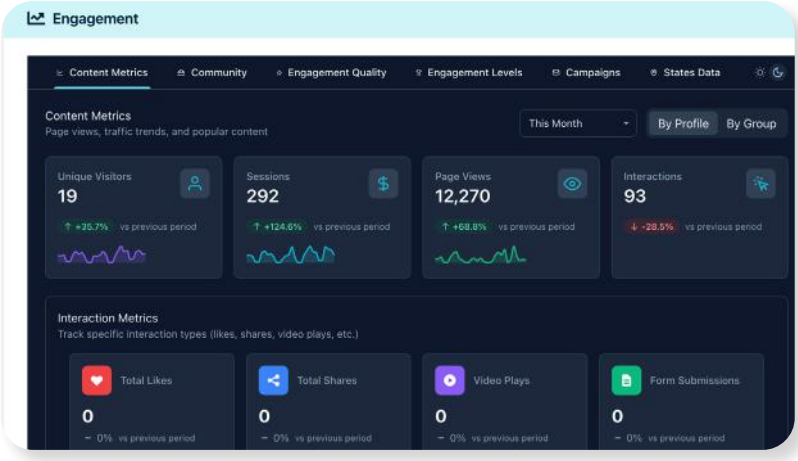


7. Engagement (User Analytics & Reporting Insights)

Engagement All the data from QualiNav at your fingertips in real time

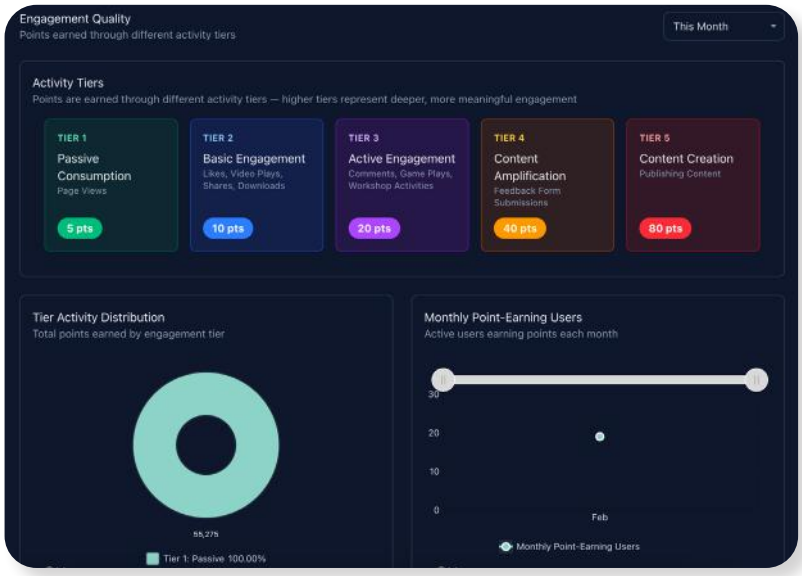
- **Engagement Metrics**
- **Community Management**
- **Data Driven Campaigns**
- **CMS Report Ready Real Time Data**
- **Engagement Modelling**

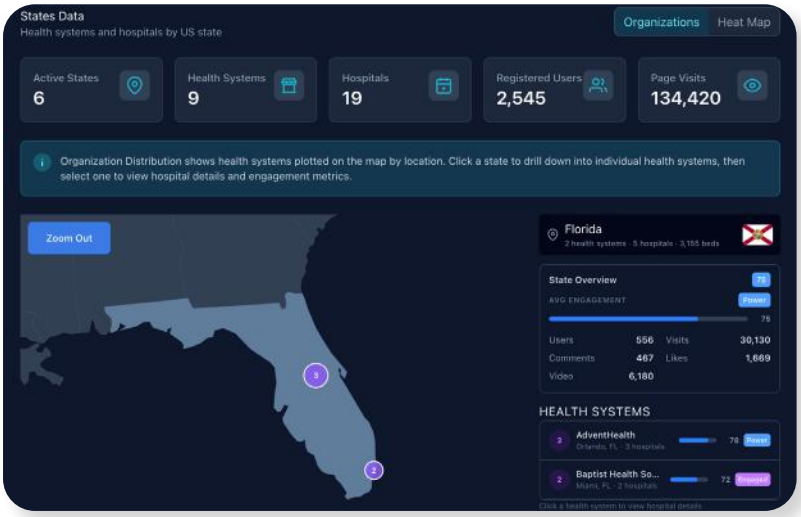
Understanding how your team interacts with your initiatives is crucial for continuous improvement. The **Engagement** zone is a powerful back-end analytics hub that puts all the data from QualiNav at your fingertips in real time.



+ **Data Driven Campaigns:** Turn insights into action. We can utilize back-end data to collaboratively build campaigns with you, dynamically adjusting content based on actual user activity and demand.

+ **CMS Report Ready Real Time Data:** Simplify your compliance and demonstrate your impact. Our analytics page will be a gold mine for your CMS reporting. Furthermore, we can assist you with building out timely reports for key stakeholders to clearly demonstrate the value you are creating through this partnership.





+ **Engagement Metrics:** Gain total visibility into platform usage. We can measure every user and click within the hub, allowing us to track cohorts, regions, and the user rates of every single feature.

Impact, ROI & Sustainability

1. Measurable Impact

QualiNav is designed to move rural hospitals from "crisis-driven compliance" to highly reliable systems. By automating the administrative burden, it frees Quality Directors to focus on patient safety.

- **Improved Compliance & Readiness:** Achieving **90%+ compliance rates** with federal and state reporting requirements, drastically reducing the risk of accreditation issues and financial penalties.
- **Improved Workforce Efficiency:** Delivers a **60% reduction** in time spent on manual administrative tasks, repurposing **4–6 hours daily** for direct patient care improvement.
- **Improved Staff Retention:** Targets a **25–30% reduction** in Quality Director turnover by reducing burnout and replacing isolation with a supportive peer network.
- **Improved Clinical Outcomes:** Drives statistically significant gains in patient safety metrics, including reductions in readmissions, infections, and chronic disease management issues.

2. Return on Investment (ROI)

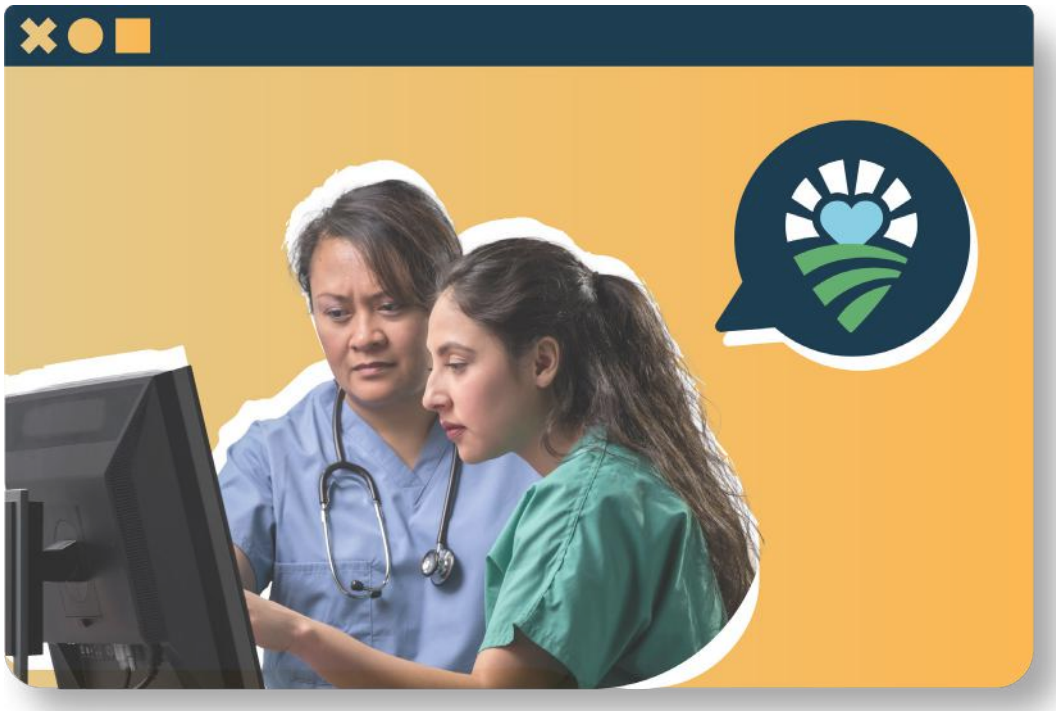
The platform generates economic value that exceeds its operational cost, creating a compelling financial case for cash-strapped rural facilities.

- **Direct Labor Savings:** Estimated **$25,000 – $35,000 annually** per hospital through the automation of routine tasks.
- **Turnover Cost Avoidance:** Savings of **$18,750 – $25,000** per hospital by preventing the loss of key staff (based on a 25% reduction of typical replacement costs).
- **Penalty Prevention:** Significant cost avoidance by eliminating CMS and state-level quality penalties and reducing reliance on expensive external consultants.
- **Group Purchasing:** Leverages statewide group purchasing power to ensure the price point remains far below the cost of the avoided adverse outcomes.

3. Measurable Impact

QualiNav is not a one-time fix but a capacity-building engine designed to outlast initial funding.

- **Financial Resilience:** By reducing labor costs and preventing penalties, the platform stabilizes the hospital's bottom line, protecting against closure.
- **Institutional Knowledge:** The system captures knowledge digitally, ensuring that if a Quality Director leaves, their expertise and data remain with the hospital rather than walking out the door.
- **Network Effects:** The "QualiNav Quality Lab" creates a permanent statewide infrastructure for peer-to-peer mentorship, meaning support comes from the community rather than just the software vendor.
- **Embedded Expertise:** Uses a "train-the-trainer" model and daily micro-learning to hardwire best practices into the local culture, making quality improvement self-sustaining.



Who we are

Kim Werkmeister
MS, RN, CPHQ, CPPS

Chief Executive Officer,
Heartland Intellicare

Kim Werkmeister is a nationally recognized healthcare leader and expert in clinical quality, patient safety, and performance improvement. With more than 30 years of experience as a Registered Nurse and healthcare executive, Ms. Werkmeister brings a rare combination of frontline clinical insight and strategic systems-level leadership. She currently serves as CEO of Heartland Intellicare, where she is spearheading the development of an AI-enabled platform designed to support quality leaders in rural and critical access hospitals.

She also serves as Senior Vice President of Improvement and Implementation at Convergence Health, where she leads large-scale, data-driven improvement collaboratives for thousands of hospitals across the U.S. focused on advancing patient outcomes and workforce resilience across rural, urban, and frontier healthcare settings. Ms. Werkmeister's prior leadership roles include Director of Quality and Patient Safety for a regional hospital system, where she provided oversight of clinical, ancillary, and operational performance initiatives. Her expertise spans clinical quality improvement, regulatory readiness, care coordination, interdisciplinary collaboration, and patient engagement.

Lindsay Milchteim
MPH

Chief Strategy Officer,
Heartland Intellicare

Lindsay Milchteim is a healthcare leader with more than 15 years of experience in patient safety, quality improvement, and healthcare transformation. She currently serves as Chief Strategy Officer at Heartland Intellicare, where she drives the development of AI-powered tools that streamline healthcare tasks and allows teams to focus on patient care.

Previously, Lindsay directed federal healthcare programs at the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) and Convergence Health, managing multimillion-dollar CMS contracts and leading statewide hospital collaboratives. Earlier in her career, she advanced Medicaid reform through New York State's DSRIP program and shaped national health policy at AARP.

Lindsay holds an MPH in Public Health Policy and a B.A. in Political Science from The George Washington University. She is a nationally recognized quality speaker, certified NCQA Patient-Centered Medical Home Content Expert and has served on New York State's Steering Committee for Advanced Primary Care, continuing to contribute to national healthcare quality and transformation initiatives.

Marc McLaughlin
CEO Do Tank

Chief Digital Officer,
Heartland Intellicare

Marc is an experienced strategy consultant, business designer and entrepreneur, who is responsible for founding Do Tank back in 2014.

He supports organizations by the use of his bold strategic thinking, creative visual design and practical implementation skills that are ever focused on delivering concrete results.

Marc has an impressive ability to confront the norm and help frame and reduce complexity allowing organizations to discuss, re-design and determine the critical few next steps required to drive strategic change.

With 13+ years of experience with corporates through to start-ups, and within a wide range of industry sectors, he enjoys realizing the successful impact of implementing our new tools, skills and mindsets within organizations.

Jennifer Wagner
CPHQ, CPPS

Rural Quality Advisor,
Heartland Intellicare

Jennifer Wagner is a rural health champion with deep Montana roots and over 16 years of experience advancing healthcare quality and access in underserved communities. She leads multi-state efforts to strengthen rural hospital programs, develop educational resources, and foster collaboration across communities and care teams.

Jennifer's career began at the Montana Hospital Association, where she supported Critical Access Hospitals through the Flex Program and other quality initiatives. She launched Montana's first centralized hub for hospital quality programs and led award-winning collaboratives focused on swing bed care and operational improvement. Her work has earned national recognition, including two Quality Improvement and Innovation Awards from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy.

She is the co-lead for the development of the National Alliance for Rural Healthcare Improvement (NARHI), a collaborative initiative focused on advancing rural health through shared learning, strategic partnerships, and innovative programming.

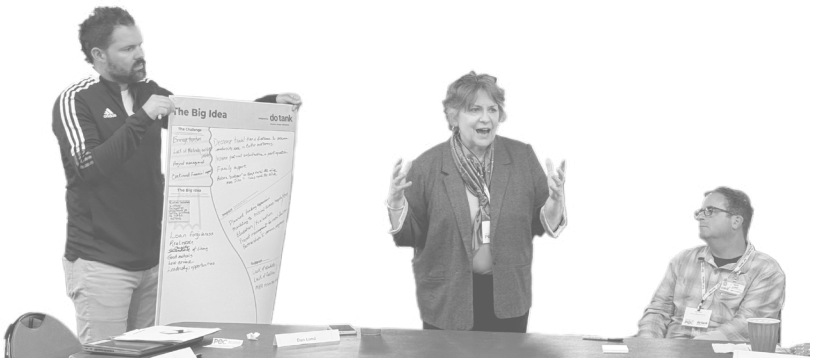
Jennifer also contributes to rural health education and quality improvement initiatives across the country, including curriculum design, advisory panels, and training sessions on topics such as CAH Quality Infrastructure and CPHQ exam preparation.

Jennifer holds a BA in Public Health with a minor in Psychology from Carroll College and is currently pursuing her Master of Public Health at UC Berkeley.

Adam Kohlrus
BA, MS, CPHQ, CPPS

Chief Health Strategist,
Heartland Intellicare

Adam Kohlrus has over 20 years of experience in the healthcare field, spanning rural clinics in Africa to Board rooms with health systems across the country. He has worked for over 15 years with hospitals on issues such as readmissions, hospital acquired conditions, patient safety, population health and health equity. In leading state and federally funded quality improvement grants for the Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA) Adam has experienced the acute needs of our rural healthcare providers.

His role at IHA was focused on the small and rural constituency with a focus on quality improvement across the 51 Critical Access Hospitals in Illinois. In his current role he is leading both regional and national learning collaboratives with Quality Directors, Chief Innovation Officers and Population Health leaders.

Adam also served in the Peace Corps as a Community Health volunteer in both Swaziland, Africa and Guyana, South America before working at Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, DC. His expertise spans clinical quality improvement, community development, digital human-centered design platforms, health/maternal/racial equity, care coordination and collaboration.