

## Mission

*To partner with forward-thinking healthcare leaders to safeguard assets, enhance patient safety, and inspire innovation.*

## Vision

*Through our collective experience and unique expertise, we will provide the leading pathway for managing risk and improving safety in healthcare.*

# LIGHTHOUSE GRANT APPLICATION

## DEFINITION

The Lighthouse Grant category focuses on quality and patient safety risk mitigation activities that a member organization would like to complete within the next eighteen months.

## ELIGIBILITY & STRUCTURE

- AEIX Members are eligible to apply.
- For purposes of this application, "Member" includes any organization (*e.g., hospital, clinic, long-term care, urgent care, behavioral health, outpatient services*) as well as any department (*e.g., Risk Management, Patient Safety, Quality, High Reliability Team*) or individual unit (*e.g., ICU, Med-Surg, Perinatal, Environmental Services, Human Resources/Talent, Education*) within a member system.
- Grants are limited to projects that are forecasted to be completed within the next eighteen (18) months.
- Grants are typically awarded for dollar amounts up to \$12,000 or less.
- Details of the requested amount must be provided (breakdown of the anticipated costs)
- Grants must have accompanying information that supports the project's goals in demonstrating improved patient safety (risk reduction).
- Grant Application Winners: Receipts are sent to AEIX and reimbursed to the member organization.

## EXAMPLES OF PAST LIGHTHOUSE GRANT WINNERS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Implementation of Mobile Triage in the Emergency Setting</b><br>This Initiative was designed to proactively support patients through high-risk transitions of care. Its goal was to reduce preventable harm, improve outcomes, and optimize the patient experience.                                                                                 | <b>Clinic Administered Medication Safety</b><br>The project represented a critical step in advancing medication safety and reducing risk across our ambulatory clinics, where infrastructure for safe medication management has historically been limited funding would help us purchase the ACCUVAX and Omnicells. |
| <b>Connected Care</b><br>Front Door Initiative was designed to proactively support patients through high-risk transitions of care. Its goal was to reduce preventable harm, improve outcomes, and optimize the patient experience.                                                                                                                     | <b>RN Orientation Simulation Program</b><br>The grant focused on the purchase of simulation equipment to enhance nursing orientation to improve skills, competency, and outcomes.                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Enhancing Maternal-Fetal Health Education Through High-Fidelity Simulation &amp; the Acquisition of the Noelle Birthing Simulator</b><br>The grant focused on the quality of clinical training healthcare providers receive and addressed the growing need for competent, confident, and well-prepared medical professionals in labor and delivery. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## INSTRUCTIONS

## APPLICANT INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Complete** the application in its entirety by typing into the fields. Handwritten applications will not be accepted.
2. **Submit** your application in WORD format. Do not scan and send the document or send in a non-editable format.
3. **Send** your completed application to your system (corporate) Risk Management Leader - or equivalent for your organization - for review and submission to AEIX.
  - *Before sending the application to your system (corporate) Risk Management Leader (or equivalent for your organization), applicants should collaborate with their local Risk Management and/or Patient Safety leaders in accordance with internal expectations.*

## RISK MANAGEMENT LEADER (CORPORATE OR SYSTEM)

1. **Review** the application for completeness. Blank fields or incomplete information may result in disqualification.
2. **Submit** the application(s) to AEIX at [aeixawards@premierinc.com](mailto:aeixawards@premierinc.com). We cannot accept applications directly from the applicant.

Grant monies are **not** to be used for compensating the organization's staff for their efforts related to the grant including paying salaries, overtime pay, or time spent conducting the grant work.

**Application period opens Monday, May 11, 2026 and closes on Friday, July 17, 2026.**

Notifications of winning and non-winning applications will be sent on or before Friday, November 20, 2026.

Please complete all questions and fields in the application.  
Incomplete applications may be disqualified.

## LIGHTHOUSE GRANT APPLICATION

|    |                                                                                                              |                                                            |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Applicant Name(s):                                                                                           | Cecily Townsend                                            |
| 2  | Title(s):                                                                                                    | Volunteer Program Supervisor                               |
| 3  | Hospital or Entity Name:                                                                                     | St. Peter's Health                                         |
| 4  | Healthcare System:                                                                                           | Mountain States Healthcare Reciprocal Risk Retention Group |
| 5  | Clinical or Operational Area:                                                                                | ICU, Emergency Dept, Med/Surg In-Patient Areas             |
| 6  | Project Title:                                                                                               | Care and Comfort Cart Program                              |
| 7  | Mailing Address:<br>(where the notification of the winning applications and the award check should be sent): | 2500 Broadway St.<br>Helena, MT 59601                      |
| 8  | Telephone:                                                                                                   | 406-447-2910                                               |
| 9  | E-mail Address(s):                                                                                           | ctownsend@sphealth.org                                     |
| 10 | Name and address of Hospital/Entity (LOCAL) Risk Manager:                                                    | Michelle Rush<br>2500 Broadway St.<br>Helena, MT 59601     |
| 11 | Name of and address of SYSTEM Risk Manager (or equivalent role) if different from above:                     |                                                            |
| 12 | Name and address of Hospital/Entity/System CEO                                                               | Wade Johnson<br>2500 Broadway St.<br>Helena, MT 59601      |
| 13 | Name and address of Hospital/Entity/System CFO                                                               | Nate Coburn<br>2500 Broadway St.<br>Helena, Mt. 59601      |

14. The project being proposed involves the following clinical areas (Check all that apply):

- ☐ Ambulatory Care or Clinic
- ☐ Emergency Services
- ☐ Hospital/System-wide Focus
- ☐ Infection Prevent
- ☐ Obstetrics/Perinatal
- ☒ Patient Safety or Risk Management
- ☒ Quality
- ☐ Radiology/Imaging Services
- ☐ Surgical/Peri-Operative
- ☐ Other (Please specify) [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

15. Briefly describe the project and its importance to the organization: (**one** paragraph maximum)

The Care and Comfort Cart Program will provide hospitalized patients and their families with essential personal items and engaging comfort resources that are often forgotten or unavailable during an unexpected hospital stay. The carts will be stocked with items such as reading glasses, hearing

amplifiers, phone chargers, books, puzzles, and healing art activity packs. Hospital volunteers will make regular rounds, offering these items to patients and families based on their individual needs. Higher-value items, including hearing amplifiers and phone chargers, will be available through a checkout system and returned upon discharge. This program is designed to improve the patient experience while supporting positive clinical outcomes. Access to vision and hearing assistance can help reduce the risk of hospital-acquired delirium by promoting orientation, communication, and cognitive engagement. Comfort and activity items such as books, puzzles, and art packs provide meaningful distraction, reduce boredom and anxiety, and encourage mental stimulation during prolonged hospital stays. By addressing both basic needs and emotional well-being, the Care and Comfort Cart Program will enhance patient-centered care, improve quality of life during hospitalization, and support healthier recovery for patients and their families.

16. Explain how the proposed project described in Question #15 will improve patient safety or reduce the potential for liability: (one paragraph maximum)

Delirium prevention measures improve patient safety by addressing modifiable risk factors that contribute to confusion, disorientation, and cognitive decline during hospitalization. Patients who can see and hear clearly are better able to understand their surroundings, communicate with caregivers, participate in their care, and remain oriented to time and place. Providing access to reading glasses, hearing amplifiers, and other sensory aids helps reduce sensory deprivation, which is a well-established risk factor for delirium. Activities such as reading, puzzles, and therapeutic art also promote cognitive stimulation, reduce anxiety, and encourage engagement, further supporting delirium prevention. From a hospital operations perspective, preventing delirium can reduce complications that increase both healthcare costs and organizational risk. Patients who develop delirium are at higher risk for falls, unplanned removal of IV lines and catheters, medication errors, aggressive behaviors, prolonged hospital stays, and readmissions. These events can result in additional treatment, increased staff time, and potential liability if preventable harm occurs. By proactively providing evidence-based interventions that support orientation and cognitive function, the Care and Comfort Cart Program helps create a safer care environment, reduces the likelihood of adverse events, and demonstrates the hospital's commitment to high-quality, patient-centered care.

17. List the metric(s) or other criteria that will be used to measure and to sustain success? (one paragraph maximum)

The success of the Care and Comfort Cart Program will be evaluated using a combination of utilization, patient experience, and clinical outcome measures. Program utilization will be tracked by documenting the number of patients and family members served, the types and quantities of items distributed, volunteer rounding frequency, volunteer hours contributed, and checkout and return rates for reusable items such as hearing amplifiers and phone chargers. Patient and family satisfaction will be assessed through brief surveys and comments regarding whether the resources improved comfort, communication, and the overall hospital experience. When feasible, the hospital will also monitor clinical quality indicators, including rates of delirium, falls, and other preventable adverse events among the populations served. These measures will help determine the program's effectiveness in improving patient safety, enhancing the patient experience, and supporting high-quality, patient-centered care while informing future program improvements and potential expansion.

18. Please describe the anticipated tangible results of the proposed project that could be shared *as Best*

*Practices* with other members of AEIX: (one paragraph maximum)

The Care and Comfort Cart Program will establish a sustainable, evidence-informed best practice that supports patient safety, comfort, and recovery through non-pharmacologic delirium prevention interventions. By ensuring access to vision and hearing aids, cognitive engagement activities, and essential personal items, the program addresses modifiable risk factors associated with delirium while enhancing the overall patient experience. Tangible results will include increased access to sensory support resources, improved patient and family satisfaction, expanded volunteer engagement, and implementation of a standardized process for providing comfort items across the hospital. The program also creates a replicable model of patient-centered care that aligns with nationally recognized best practices, including the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's 4Ms Framework (What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility) and the Age-Friendly Health Systems initiative. By supporting the "Mentation" component through delirium prevention and cognitive engagement, while also addressing "What Matters" by responding to patients' individual comfort and communication needs, the program promotes safer hospital stays, enhances the patient and family experience, and supports improved clinical outcomes.

19. Provide the amount you are requesting from AEIX for this project. AEIX grants may not exceed \$12,000.

**\$6500**

20. Provide a breakdown of costs for your grant (details of costs):

| Item                                                           | Estimated Cost |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| One rolling medical-grade cart                                 | \$1,000        |
| Reading glasses (50 pairs, assorted strengths)                 | \$500          |
| Personal hearing amplifiers (10–15 units)                      | \$1500         |
| Multi-device phone chargers (20)                               | \$300          |
| Books, magazines, puzzle books                                 | \$700          |
| Healing art/activity packs                                     | \$1,200        |
| Puzzles, playing cards, games                                  | \$500          |
| Storage bins, labels, checkout supplies                        | \$400          |
| Infection prevention supplies (disinfecting wipes, bags, etc.) | \$200          |
| Marketing/Signage                                              | \$200          |
| <b>Estimated Total</b>                                         | <b>\$6,500</b> |

21. Is this practice an original concept created by the project team, or is it based on successful practices that have been evaluated from literature or other healthcare providers which are being implemented for the first time?

The Care and Comfort Cart Program is based on evidence-supported interventions that have been successfully implemented in hospitals nationwide through delirium prevention and patient experience initiatives. Programs such as the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) have demonstrated that providing

non-pharmacologic interventions—including vision and hearing support, cognitive stimulation, and volunteer engagement—can reduce delirium, improve patient safety, decrease falls, shorten hospital stays, and lower healthcare costs. Similarly, hospitals participating in the Age-Friendly Health Systems initiative incorporate many of these same practices as part of nationally recognized standards for improving care for older adults. By combining these proven strategies into an easily accessible volunteer-led Care and Comfort Cart Program, our hospital will provide a practical, sustainable, and patient-centered intervention that enhances both the quality of care and the overall patient and family experience.

22. How does the grant align with AEIX's mission of *"To partner with forward-thinking healthcare leaders to safeguard assets, enhance patient safety, and inspire innovation"* and vision of *"Through our collective experience and unique expertise, we will provide the leading pathway for managing risk and improving safety in healthcare."*?

From a risk management perspective, the program has the potential to reduce adverse events associated with delirium, including falls, unplanned device removal, prolonged hospitalization, and other preventable complications that can increase healthcare costs and organizational liability. Utilizing trained volunteers to deliver these resources creates a sustainable, cost-effective model that complements clinical care while allowing nursing staff to focus on direct patient care. The program also reflects AEIX's vision of improving safety through collective expertise and innovation. It integrates nationally recognized best practices from delirium prevention and Age-Friendly Health Systems into a practical, scalable initiative that can be expanded across the organization and shared as a model for other healthcare facilities. By investing in proactive, patient-centered interventions that improve both safety and the patient experience, the Care and Comfort Cart Program demonstrates how innovative strategies can strengthen quality of care, reduce risk, and support healthier outcomes for patients and their families.

23. Additional information to support the quality of your grant proposal:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

You may attach any supporting documentation such as graphs, tables, posters, PowerPoint to the application.

24. Indicate the "Primary Clinical Sponsor" (Responsible for monitoring the progress of the initiative which is the basis of the grant, and for submitting receipts and other documentation supporting the use of grant funds, including a one to two-page summary of the grant's outcome.)

**Name:** Cecily Townsend  
**Title:** Volunteer Program Supervisor  
**Contact Email:** ctownsend@sphealth.org  
**Contact Phone Number:** 406-447-2910

25. Indicate an "Alternate Clinical Sponsor" (Responsible for supporting the responsibilities of the Primary

Clinical Sponsor, and assuming those responsibilities if the Primary Clinical Sponsor is unable to fulfill the requirements of the project.)

**Name:** Danielle Durkin

**Title:** Volunteer and Employee Engagement Coordinator

**Contact Email:** [ddurkin@sphealth.org](mailto:ddurkin@sphealth.org)

**Contact Phone Number:** 406-447-2520

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