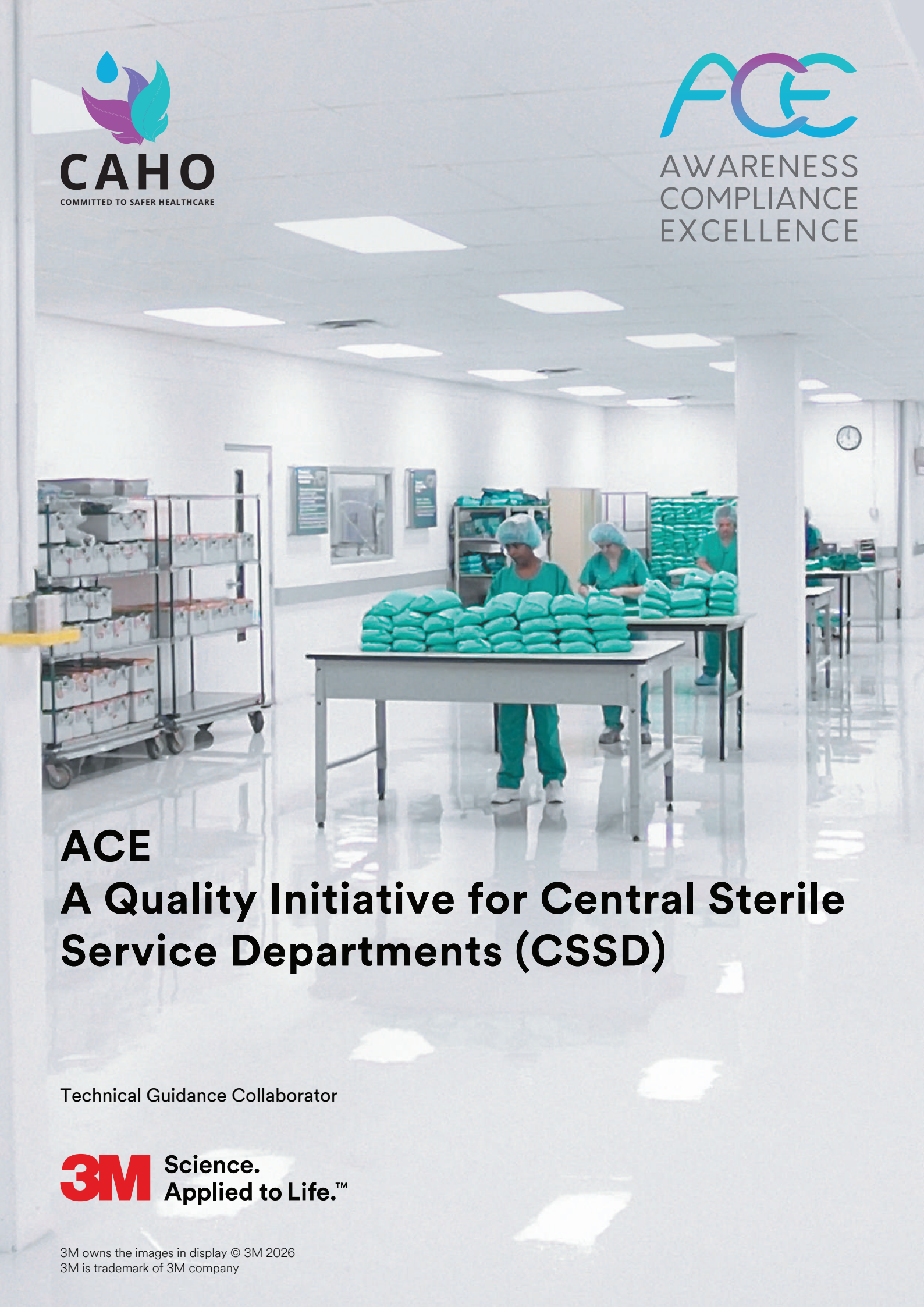




ACE **A Quality Initiative for Central Sterile Service Departments (CSSD)**

Technical Guidance Collaborator

3M Science.
Applied to Life.™

Message from CAHO Leadership



DR. VIJAY AGARWAL
President Emeritus, CAHO

The vision of any hospital is to provide safe and the best quality care to the patients. Preventing nosocomial infections has become the biggest challenge in providing safe care. The crucial role that CSSD plays in lowering the infection rate within the hospital cannot be over emphasized and yet it does not get the attention that it deserves from the management. We have decided to undertake the herculean task of improving the compliance to the standards and guidelines - through ACE. The ACE program would be a platform to assess the protocols implemented in CSSD of your institution and work with your team to identify gaps and improve and incorporate the best practices.



DR. LALLU JOSEPH
President of CAHO

The scope of a CSSD department has expanded from a department with just an autoclave unit to play a pivotal role in ensuring dedicated workflow of sterile supplies and thus becoming an important pillar of infection prevention in a hospital. This brings strong emphasis for the staff members to know how to perform every task and understand why it is being performed. The functionality of CSSD has to be given the same respect as operation theatre. This is a great challenge as most of the personnel working have not gone through a recognized structured training program. Through the educational modules lined up as a part of ACE program, we aim to empower the CSSD team, which would yield in increased efficiency and improved patient safety.

ACE Overview

The pivotal role of the Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD) is to provide consistent disinfection and sterilization services. This can be a monumental task yet a vital link. To help HealthCare Organizations, CAHO is proud to present ACE, a Quality Initiative program which aims to enhance the knowledge and capabilities of the staff and upgrade the practices in the CSSD. The ACE program aims to bring in Awareness, ensure Compliance and reward Excellence.

The primary objective of ACE program is to facilitate capacity building amongst CSSD professionals, share best practices, and provide benchmarking, while promoting and continuously improving the quality and safety of healthcare services as per the latest Standards and Guidelines.

ACE programs helps in:

- Knowledge enhancement through ACE Learning Courses.
- Guidance and Consultation by the Experts to the CSSD Staff to promote adherence to the Standards and Guidelines
- Certification for the CSSD professionals by CAHO after successful completion of the courses
- Auditing & Gap analysis of the CSSD Facility by the CAHO team
- Hospitals shall be 'ACE Certified' for their CSSD facility upon attaining compliance in each section (Refer ACE Sectional Scoring Page for more details).
- Recognition and awards for the top winners at CAHOCON Separate category for New Registrants & Renewing hospitals

Awareness

Support standardization, adoption of best practices in accordance with the international guidelines

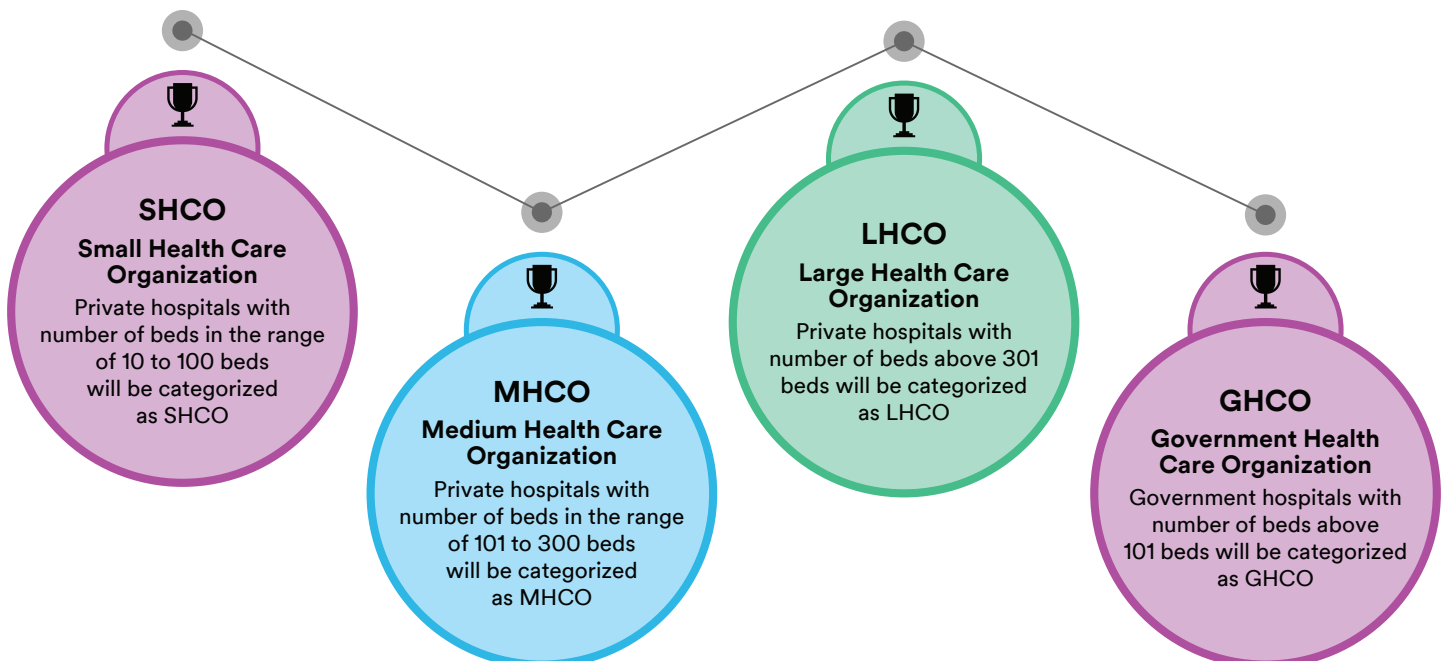
Compliance

Measure compliance, gap analysis and process improvements by regular audits.

Excellence

Reward and recognize Excellence

Registration Categories



ACE Renewals (For Hospitals registering for their certificate renewals)

Renewal participation is more than a continuation - it reflects a commitment to staying updated, maintaining quality and evolving alongside the ever-changing sterilization guidelines. By renewing, hospitals demonstrate leadership, accountability and dedication to continuous quality improvement. To strengthen continued renewal participation, we are excited to introduce a dedicated **“Renewals”** category within the ACE program with exclusive learning modules and recognition opportunities.



Exclusive Educational Content



Dedicated Renewal Awards



Opportunities to showcase long-term excellence

Exclusive Educational Content:

Renewal hospitals will gain access to specially curated **ACE Expert Training Modules** - designed to address the most relevant and critical needs of the healthcare. These high-impact modules are delivered by industry experts, ensuring practical insights, real-world expertise and up-to-date best practices.

ACE Program - Deliverables and Timelines

01

ACE Launch & Registration

The hospital registers on the CAHO Website by paying Rs. 15,000 + 18% GST.

Time Frame: 15th June 2026 to 30th July 2026.

02

ACE Training Modules

The hospital team to complete the ACE Training Modules on the 3M E-Learning Platform.

Time Frame: 1st August 2026 to 15th September 2026.

03

ACE Virtual Mentoring

The ACE Auditor conducts the virtual mentoring in the registered hospital virtually.

Time Frame: 16th September 2026 to 30th October 2026.

04

Gap Identification & Resolution

CAHO team shares the virtual mentoring feedback as provided by the ACE auditor. Hospital shall be provided 2 months to incorporate the feedback suggested.

Time Frame: 1st November 2026 to 30th November 2026.

05

Physical Audit

The ACE auditor conduct the physical audit in the registered hospital premise.

Time Frame: 1st December 2026 to 10th February 2027.

06

CAHOCON 2027

The ACE Auditor would submit the results to CAHO for final vetting. The ACE Winners & Qualifiers (New & Renewals) would be announced in CAHOCON (Tentatively in April 2027).

ACE Sectional Scoring

The ACE Checklist is structured into key sections that encompass the critical guideline requirements for CSSD operations. These sections are designed to help facilities assess their current practices, identify improvement opportunities, and align with established best practices and standard operating procedures (SOPs).

To achieve ACE Certification, a minimum score of 70% in each individual section and an overall 80% has to be attained. This requirement ensures balanced performance across all critical areas rather than overall compliance

Please note Loaner Instrument Management will not be considered for this evaluation.

Section	Section Name
01	Handling, Collection & Transport of Contaminated Instruments
02	Cleaning & Decontamination Processes
03	Instrument Inspection, Preparation & Packaging
04	Sterilization & Monitoring
05	Physical monitors, Chemical indicators & Biological indicators
06	BI Test/ Control & results / Qualification Testing
07	Loaner Instrument Management
08	Sterile Storage & Distribution
09	Documentation-Equipment & Cycles
10	Facility Design
11	Personnel Considerations

ACE Rewards & Recognition

As mentioned in the ACE Sectional Scoring section, it is critical for hospitals to attain 70% compliance in each section to be ACE certified. To celebrate continued commitment and consistency, there shall be separate awards for hospitals registering for the first time & hospitals which are renewing their certification.

New Hospitals:

To recognize the efforts of the participating hospitals, "ACE Regional Awards" is introduced. All states would be bucketed into one of the 4 regions- North, South, West and East (Refer Terms & Conditions section for more details). Within each defined region, a maximum of 4 hospitals would be recognized (1 LHCO, 1 MHCO, 1 SHCO and 1 GHCO).

Renewal Hospitals:

Based on the renewal attempt, hospitals shall receive different certificates



The Top 3 scoring hospitals in each renewing category (irrespective of LHCO/MHCO/SHCO/GHCO) shall be felicitated in CAHOCON 2027.

Registration Process

- The registration window opens from 15th June 2026 to 30th July 2026. By registering, hospital agrees to allow access to their CSSD for both virtual and physical audit; including and not limiting to facility, documentation and staff interaction.
- To register, interested hospitals are required to submit the registration form on the CAHO website <https://www.caho.in/programform/990/awareness-compliance-excellence-for-cssd> along with the program fee payment of Rs. 15,000 plus 18% GST. The fee covers ACE courses, 1 virtual and 1 physical audit.
- After registration and upon receipt of the payment acknowledgment - instructions will be sent to the registered Email IDs to access and complete the Basic and Advanced courses. These courses have to be completed within the stipulated time frame.
- CAHO would be organizing technical refreshers to address any technical queries from the hospitals. The invitation links to attend the same would be sent only to the registered email ids which can be forwarded internally to the team members.
- Upon successful completion of the Training modules, All registered hospitals would be eligible to undergo the virtual mentoring call organized by CAHO. The CAHO auditor performing the virtual mentoring call may suggest action items which the participating hospital could implement for better guideline adherence. These are only improvement suggestion(s) for the team to work prior to the physical audit.
- The participating hospital would be given time to incorporate the suggestion(s) provided during the virtual mentoring call. Post which, the participating hospital shall be notified to schedule for physical audit. The participating hospital would be audited on the agreed date (dates shall be communicated over mail from CAHO).
- The CAHO auditor would be visiting physically to evaluate the participating hospital and their current guideline adherences.
- On basis of the physical audit scores, hospitals upon meeting minimum of 70% compliance in each section & overall 80% in the ACE checklist will be provided ACE certificate from CAHO. This ACE certificate would be valid for two years in conjunction with periodic assessments monitored by CAHO.
- Refer the ACE rewards Structure for more details.

Basic Training Courses (Applicable for Newly Registered Hospitals)

Module 1 Science of Device Reprocessing Part 1

Module 2 Science of Device Reprocessing Part 2

Advanced Training Courses (Applicable for Newly Registered Hospitals)

Module 1 Standards and Guidelines in Device Reprocessing

Module 2 Cleaning and Decontamination of Used instruments

Module 3 Instrument Preparation, Packaging & Loading

Module 4 Steam Sterilization and Low Temperature Sterilization Methodologies

Module 5 Sterilization monitoring and Assurance

Module 6 Sterile Storage, Supplies and Documentation

Module 7 CSSD Facility Design and CSSD Staff management

Expert Training Courses (Applicable for ACE Renewal Hospitals)

Module 1 Single Use Device Management

Module 2 Loaner Instrument Management

Module 3 How to choose the right CSSD solutions

Terms and Conditions

- ACE program is organized under the aegis of CAHO with 3M as the technical guidance collaborator.
- Only hospital entries would be considered. Individual participation will not be considered for the event. All entrants must be legal residents of India.
- The information provided at the time of registration would be shared with 3M India. By participating in ACE program, you agree to allow CAHO and 3M India to use your hospital name, address, hospital images and logos only in connection with program related publication for advertising, promotional or publicity purposes worldwide (except where prohibited) without limitation.
- Correspondence to any program related communication will be sent ONLY to the email-IDs provided during the time of the registration.
- Registration details and virtual mentoring call's feedback shall be shared with the visiting CAHO auditor for physical audit.
- **REGISTRATION FEE CLAUSE:** The program fee of Rs.15,000 + 18% GST has to be made while registering on the CAHO website only via the payment gateway made available on the website. This fee covers ACE Training modules courses, 1 virtual mentoring call and 1 physical audit and shall be applicable for the participation period between of ACE 2026. If the participating hospital fails to complete the entire ACE program within the timelines (Refer the ACE Timelines Page for more information)., this registration fee shall not be refunded and they would have to re-register once again for ACE'2027.
- The participating hospital should self register their team members to the E-Learning Platform. Detailed instructions shall be sent to the registered Email IDs only.
- It is mandatory for the CSSD staff members with less than 2 years of work experience to get the Basic Course Certification. It is mandatory for the CSSD staff members above 2 years of work experience to get the Advanced Course Certification.
- It is the responsibility of the hospital administrator and the CSSD Head from the respective participating hospital to ensure their CSSD team members take up and complete the educational modules within the stipulated time frames.
- All the webinars or virtual audit would happen either on the zoom.US or Microsoft team's platform depending on the feasibility.
- Please note that the virtual mentoring call is only a consultative audit and would not be considered as a part of the final scoring.
- **REGIONAL AWARDS (Only for new registrations):**
The states within the 4 regional categorization are as follows:
North Zone: Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, New Delhi, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Ladakh, Chandigarh
East Zone: Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Orissa.
South Zone: Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Pondicherry, Andaman & Nicobar.
West Zone: Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep.

Terms and Conditions

- Please refer to the Rewards & Recognition section for details for the new & renewal accounts. If there are no eligible winners under a particular hospital category, the reward would not be transferred to any other hospital category.
- All the certificates or trophies will be sent post the winner announcement by CAHO.
- All action items will have to be completed within the stipulated time frame. Entries that do not comply with the official rules in any respect will be considered disqualified.
- CAHO reserves the right to verify entries for authenticity. CAHO India's decisions on all matters pertaining to the ACE project are final and binding.
- The participating hospital would have to revert to all communication within 10 days of notification. Else the participating hospital's position may be forfeited.
- CAHO reserves the right to cancel or modify the program at any time.
- No claims or demands shall lie against 3M as a consequence thereof under any circumstances.
- Any disputes or differences related to the Program shall be governed by laws of India and shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the High Court at Bengaluru.

Contact Us

For any support/queries related to the project, reach out to

Help Desk: +91 7428892072

E-Mail: cahoace@gmail.com

For E- Learning Portal related queries, please write to:

E-Mail: 3mhcbcare.in@mmm.com



More About the Partners



CAHO is a not-for-profit body with the stated, primary goal of enabling quality initiatives in Indian healthcare settings. This is being done through focused courses, workshops, and training programs for implementation of quality in healthcare.

CAHO is spreading the message of quality in healthcare at the grassroots level.

The flagship CPQIH, CPQIL, CPHIC and CQP initiatives are all part of the bigger game plan to systematically infuse the idea of Quality at the bottom of the healthcare pyramid.

While NABH- and NABL-accredited organizations form the core of its membership, other healthcare organizations and individuals desirous of joining the quality movement are also a part of CAHO.



3M Health Care is committed to providing the health care community with innovative solutions, leveraging 3M diversified technologies to help improve the quality of life. No matter what your role is, in helping to prevent healthcare associated infections in your facilities – from Sterile Processing, to the OR, to Infection Prevention or Administration – 3M has innovative solutions designed to help you do your job better. In the area of infection prevention, a continuous focus on education is critical for success. 3M Health Care has long been respected for the breadth and depth of its investment in education. You can depend on our dedicated experts, with their knowledge of technology, product application and best clinical practice, to support you with practical advice that addresses your everyday challenges.



AWARENESS
COMPLIANCE
EXCELLENCE



CAHO
COMMITTED TO SAFER HEALTHCARE

Technical Guidance Collaborator

3M Science.
Applied to Life.™

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