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Advancing  
abdominal core  
health through  
collaboration

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**03** PRESIDENT'S  
MESSAGE

---

**06** MILESTONES

---

**15** SUPPORTERS

**05** LEADERSHIP

---

**09** DATA, DIALOGUE &  
SHARED LEARNING

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**"Together, we are demonstrating that real world clinical data can guide decision making and drive meaningful improvements in everyday practice."**

As I reflect on 2025, I see a year defined by momentum that truly matters. What began over a decade ago as an ambitious vision has grown into an international organization grounded in purpose and united by a shared commitment to improving outcomes for patients with hernia disease and abdominal core conditions.

This year, that purpose translated into measurable progress. Our Registry continued to expand in both geography and participation, strengthening the depth and breadth of the data we collect. More importantly, those data are being put to work. They help us question long held assumptions, refine surgical approaches and improve conversations with patients about expectations and recovery.

Our collaborative spirit remains one of our greatest strengths. Thoughtful discourse, mutual respect, and a willingness to learn from one another define our culture. Together, we are demonstrating that real-world clinical data can guide decision making and drive meaningful improvements in everyday practice.

We continue to sharpen our focus on outcomes that matter most to patients. By further integrating patient feedback and shared decision-making tools, we're reminded that quality is not defined solely in the operating room. It's reflected in how patients feel, function, and return to their lives after surgery.

ACHQC's educational programs, quality improvement initiatives, and growing body of peer reviewed publications underscore our role as a trusted scientific resource. Our collective efforts are influencing practice patterns and contributing to broader considerations of opportunities to deliver greater value to our patients and communities.

None of this progress would be possible without the dedication of over 500 participating surgeons, research collaborators, FDA, Foundation Partners and most importantly our patients and their families. Your contributions sustain our mission and allow us to continue investing in innovation and education.

As we look ahead, our direction is clear. We will continue to strengthen collaborative engagement, advance registry-based research, and ensure that the insights we generate translate into measurable improvements and better care for every patient we serve.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the ACHQC and the patients who place their trust in us.

With sincere appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Rosen".

**Michael J Rosen, MD**  
President

# OUR WHY...

Behind every data point is a patient who entrusted their care to an ACHQC surgeon. Their experiences remind us that our Collaborative is not just about numbers, but about real lives, real recovery, and outcomes that truly matter.



**"We appreciate you for helping us live a better quality life!"**

## ACHQC MISSION

To maximize the quality and value of health care for patients who suffer from hernia disease and diseases of the abdominal wall or abdominal core.



**"My surgeon spoke highly of the ACHQC and the importance of having an organization dedicated to objective support for patients."**



"Thank you for being willing to hear our voices. Please remember us as humans and not metrics."



"I really like what the ACHQC is doing to collect data. I'm really impressed by the surgeons I've met through participating on the ACHQC Patient Engagement Advocacy Committee."



More education should be provided to patients: "I am hoping to help people not have to go through surgeries uninformed and with lack of knowledge of potential outcomes."



"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."



"I just wanted to congratulate you for the patient guide and app, this is really amazing to have these information available! I recently had abdominal surgery in France where I live, and I have no recommendation, information or else to rely on... Hopefully your team will increase internationally! Keep up the good work."



**No two patients are exactly alike:**

**"It seems the whole 'hernia world' as a whole - mesh industry, surgeons, prehab and rehab - is moving in the right direction for more individualized care. Hernia repairs have to be tailored to each individual patient and circumstance."**

# 2025 LEADERSHIP

Our diverse leadership team invests their time, expertise, and perspective to ensure our work continues to progress. Grounded in purpose, their steady guidance helps transform our shared mission into measurable results.

## GOVERNING BOARD



**Michael Rosen, MD**  
President/ACHQC Medical Director



**Benjamin Poulouse, MD, MPH**  
Vice President/ACHQC Director of Quality & Outcomes



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**Michael Reinhorn, MD, MBA**



**Robert Yates, MD**



**Gustavo Soares, MD**  
Brazilian Hernia Society



**Megan Melland-Smith, MD**  
Canadian Hernia Society



**Nicole Goddard**  
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**Aileen Beckler**  
Program Coordinator  
Patient Follow-up Coordinator



**Debbie Fenoglio**  
Patient Follow-up Coordinator

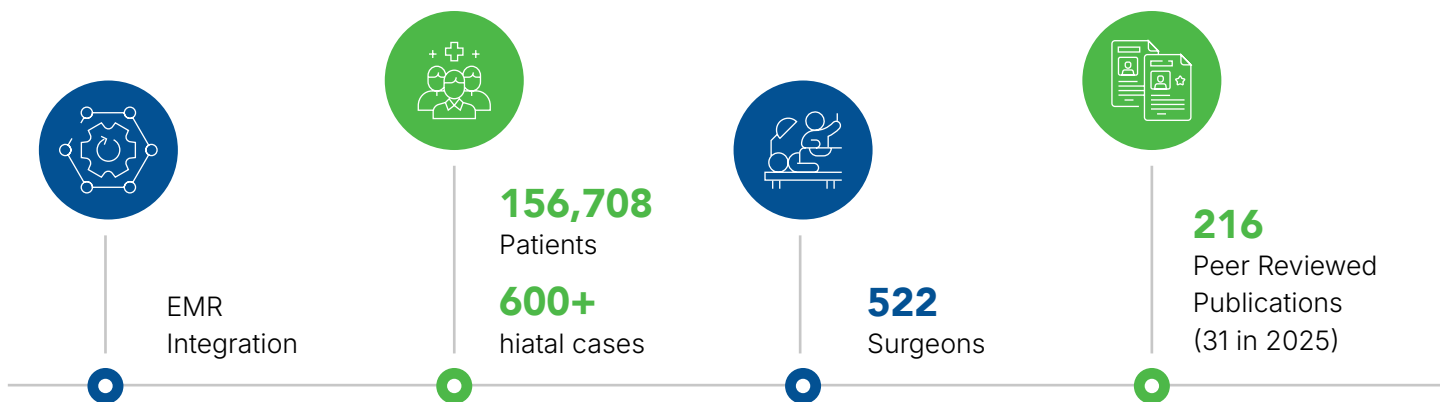


## JOIN US

Be part of the ACHQC community and help shape the future of abdominal core health.

Visit [www.achqc.org](http://www.achqc.org) to learn more about our programs, membership, and opportunities to contribute.

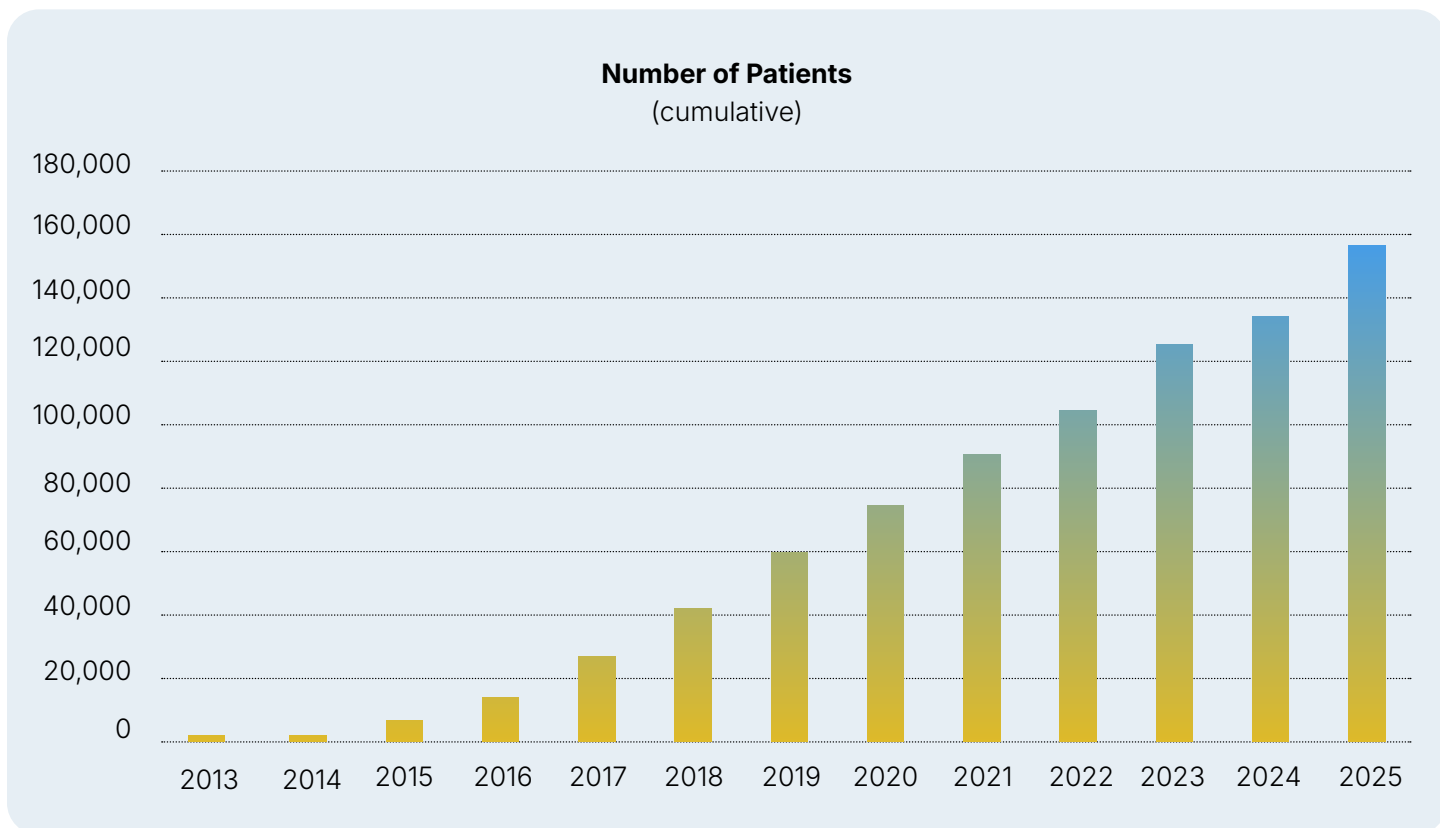
# 2025 MILESTONES

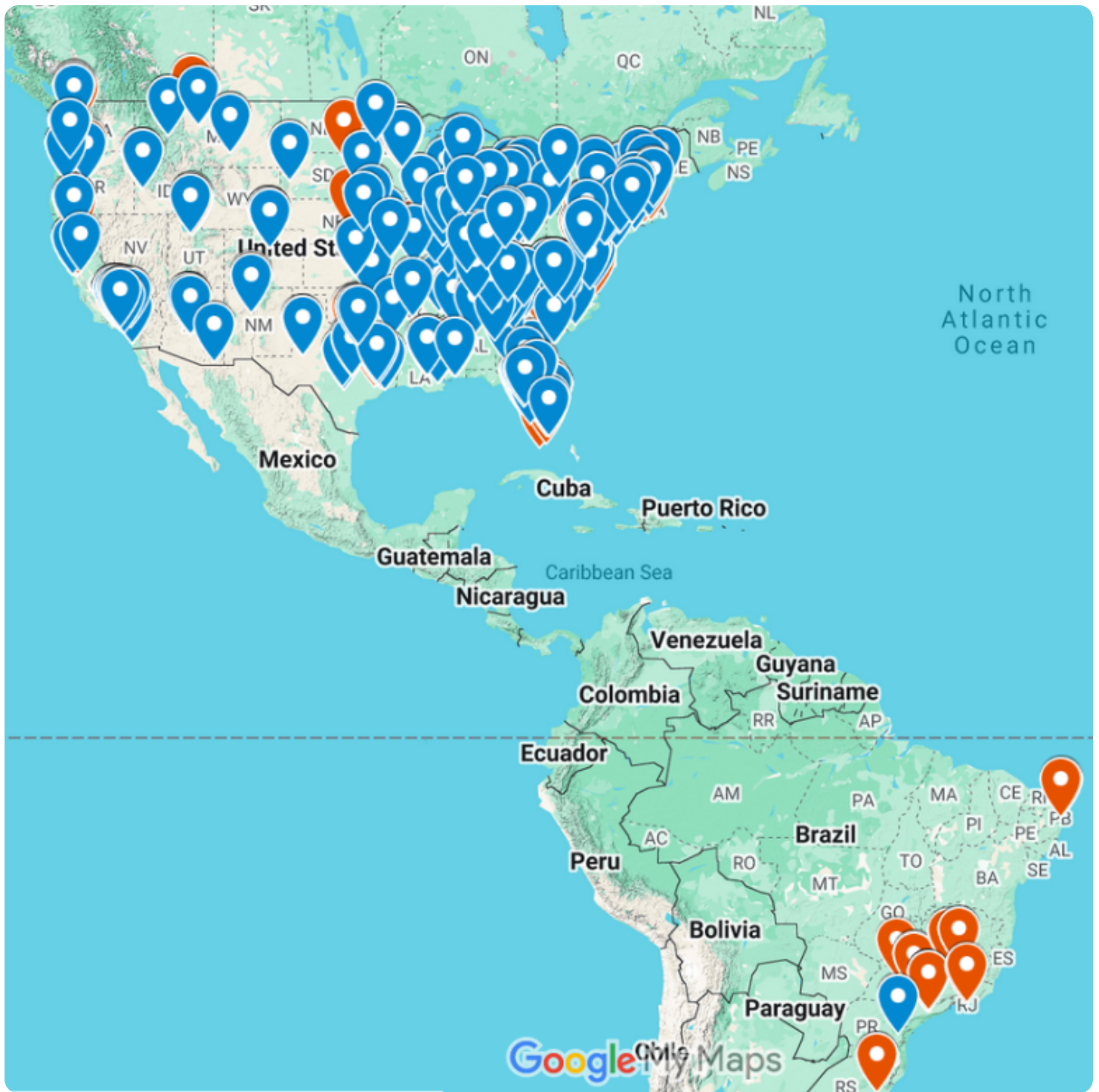


# 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

This year, ACHQC’s real-world Registry grew to include data collected on over 156,708 patients performed by over 522 surgeons in 45 states across the United States, Brazil, and Canada. Of these, there were over 18,000 patients entered in 2025.

ACHQC’s new Hiatal Hernia Module, launched in 2024, doubled to over 600 cases in 2025. The module includes clinically relevant variables and quality metrics related to surgical treatment of esophageal disease.





ACHQC continued to expand our Collaborative footprint internationally with surgeons from the Canadian Hernia Society joining our ranks in January 2025. By year's end, two Canadian hernia specialists entered 145 patients into the ACHQC Registry. Growth in Brazil continued in 2025 as well, with 14 Brazilian surgeons contributing 643 cases into the Registry.

**SPOTLIGHTS:**

# ACHQC WELCOMES CANADA TO THE COLLABORATIVE!



Through a collaboration with the Canadian Hernia Society in 2025, ACHQC continued to expand internationally, and Canadian surgeons are now able to access ACHQC's robust clinical registry.

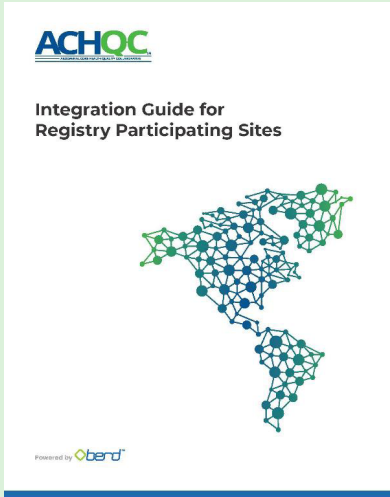
Canada's participation in ACHQC underscores its commitment to healthcare excellence and aligns with our dedication to improving surgical outcomes and enhancing the patient experience. Spearheaded by Megan Melland-Smith, MD, President of the Canadian Hernia Society, this collaboration leverages the expertise of Canadian surgeons to contribute vital insights to the global understanding of hernia surgical outcomes.

The Canadian Hernia Society is a well-established non-profit organization with a keen executive committee and members at large who are interested in tracking hernia patient outcomes and improving hernia care.



*"Until now, Canadian hernia surgeons did not have access to a clinically focused, real-world registry, making it very challenging to uniformly track surgical outcomes or contribute to hernia literature," shared Dr. Melland-Smith. This partnership with the ACHQC changes that. The Canadian Hernia Society will help establish use of the ACHQC Registry nationwide, enrolling patients across all provinces."*

- Megan Melland-Smith, MD



## REGISTRY MILESTONE: EMR INTEGRATION

ACHQC's real-world clinical registry securely houses millions of critical data points, including demographic and operative details and long-term outcomes related to hernia and abdominal core surgeries. In 2025, we validated secure integration of our Registry with EMR systems, allowing for streamlined, automated, direct data collection. This approach removes much of the work and frustration often associated with administrative data entry, saving valuable time and freeing up resources for more patient-focused engagement.

# DATA, DIALOGUE AND SHARED LEARNING

With a focus on data, dialogue, and shared learning, ACHQC continues to serve as a trusted source of clinically relevant real-world evidence in hernia surgery and abdominal core health. Throughout the year, ACHQC members presented at meetings across the country and around the world, sharing not only analyses from our data, but the lessons learned in their own practices. These engagements, grounded in evidence and shaped by experience, reflect our commitment to learning together and improving care as a community.



## EMBEDDED REGISTRY STUDIES

ACHQC is the primary platform for successful execution of hernia-related clinical trials across the USA. Our streamlined registry makes participation straightforward and practical for surgeons in academic centers and private practice. By reducing administrative burden while maintaining high quality data, ACHQC enables broad engagement in clinical research, supporting essential collaboration that strengthens the evidence base and improves care for patients.

Since 2019, findings from 13 prospective, multi-center studies conducted within the Collaborative have been published in high impact peer reviewed journals.



*Dr. Clayton Petro updated attendees on "Ongoing Registry-Embedded Studies" at the ACHQC Session during the 2025 American Hernia Society Annual Meeting.*

## DR. TODD HARRIS: LEVERAGING ACHQC TO ELEVATE HIS COMMUNITY PROFILE

Dr. Todd Harris, a busy solo private practice hernia surgeon and ACHQC Verified Surgeon of Quality, was featured in General Surgery News for his presentation at the 2025 American Hernia Society Annual Meeting. Dr. Harris shared how engagement in the ACHQC can elevate a surgeon's profile both locally and nationally. By leveraging ACHQC data to benchmark his practice, Dr. Harris distinguishes himself within his competitive Southern California area. For Dr. Harris, participation in the ACHQC isn't just about numbers though, it's about standing out in his community, sharing insights, and connecting with other leaders in the hernia field to improve patient care.



### **GENERAL SURGERY NEWS**

#### **Small Fish, Big Pond: How a Hernia Surgeon Competes in Solo Private Practice**

*"While Yelp and other online review sites help patients find anecdotal and subjective takes on Dr. Harris and his practice, his participation in the Abdominal Core Health Quality Collaborative (ACHQC) gives them objective data because that information also is available on his website."*

# 7th ANNUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SUMMIT

## EXCEPTIONAL ATTENDEE FEEDBACK



**100%**

Excellent or Good Rating  
for Overall Satisfaction



**100%**

Rated Quality of  
Presentations Excellent or  
Good

**"Great meeting! One of  
the best of the year."**

Over 90 surgeons, quality leaders, industry partners, and patient advocates shared ideas grounded in real world data and lived clinical experience at our 7th Annual Quality Improvement Summit.

The CME accredited program featured sessions on patient optimization, innovative techniques, surgeon education and expanding opportunities for application of real-world evidence and continuous quality improvement across diverse practice settings. Discussions were practical, candid, and focused on how we can better serve our patients. Following the QI Summit, attendees surveyed rated the overall program as "Excellent", with 100% of respondents rating their overall satisfaction with the meeting and the quality of presentations as "Excellent" or "Good". Highlights and select presentations are available on the ACHQC [website](#).



Leaders in abdominal core health from across the Americas gathered in Denver for the QI Summit representing a shared international commitment to improving surgical care through collaboration. Pictured (left to right) are: Gustavo Soares, MD, President of the Brazilian Hernia Society, Megan Melland-Smith, MD, President of the Canadian Hernia Society, Flavio Malcher, MD, President of the American Hernia Society, and ACHQC President, Michael Rosen, MD.

*The time-saving, streamlined features of our Registry platform were showcased at our annual QI Summit and the AHS Annual Meeting.*



# 2025 ACHQC RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENT! – CONGRATULATIONS TO NANCY LY, MD



**Nancy Ly, MD**  
PG-3 resident,  
Northwestern  
University's Feinberg  
School of Medicine

Each year at the ACHQC's Annual Quality Improvement Summit, we announce the recipient of the competitive ACHQC Resident & Fellow Research Grant award. This year, Nancy Ly, MD was selected for her study: "Evaluating the Effects of Surgical Site Infections on Patients with Different Socioeconomic Statuses: A Mixed Method Study". Dr. Ly is a PGY-3 resident at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. Mentored by Dr. Michael Rosen, Dr. Ly will present her findings at the 2026 QI Summit.



# 2025 PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

The ACHQC Registry provides a robust foundation for high quality research through the collection of extensive real world data. Each year, our exceptional analytic team works closely with surgeons to examine clinically relevant questions and conduct comprehensive statistical evaluations. These analyses undergo rigorous review, translating findings into insights that can support practice improvements and advance patient care.

In 2025, this work resulted in 31 peer reviewed publications in high impact journals, bringing the total number of ACHQC based publications to 216 since the Collaborative's inception.

The [complete bibliography](#) is available on the ACHQC website.

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# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

We are grateful to the individuals, healthcare organizations, and companies who join us in our mission. Some generously give their time and expertise, which is invaluable, while others provide financial support that allows our work to continue. We appreciate every contribution and sincerely thank all who have supported ACHQC in 2025.

## FOUNDATION PARTNERS

We are especially thankful to our Foundation Partners who share our vision for improving patient care. Their generosity makes it possible for ACHQC to grow and continue to offer free access to our Registry to our participating hernia surgeons across the Americas. Additionally, Foundation Partner support allows ACHQC to produce and deliver educational programs and resources for patients and their care providers. Their commitment allows us to reach more patients, improve care, and truly make a difference in lives every day.



Platinum  
Level

**Medtronic**  
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Gold  
Level

**ams** Advanced  
Medical  
Solutions



Silver  
Level



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& Johnson  
MedTech**



TISSIUM

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## SUPPORT THE ACHQC FOUNDATION - SCAN TO DONATE



The ACHQC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to the sustainability of quality improvement in abdominal core health. With patients at the core of our mission, we aim to enhance their experience using data and shared learning. Your generous donation helps us provide high quality programs and educational outreach to enhance patient outcomes.