



2026 Report to Western District Conference

AQORD Mission Statement

Our mission is to inspire, strengthen, and advance the effectiveness of values-aligned health and human service organizations.

The following [members](#) have ties to **Western District Conference**:

- Bethesda Home, *Goessel, Kansas*
- Parkside Homes Inc. *Hillsboro, KS*
- Bluestem Communities *North Newton, KS* (Includes Kidron Bethel, Schowalter Village, The Cedars, and Bluestem PACE)
- Mennonite Friendship Communities, *South Hutchinson, Kansas*
- Prairie View, *Newton, KS*

Activities

- MHS Association and Friends Services Alliance affiliated on January 1, 2026. The newly merged organization now operates under the name AQORD and serves a total of 90 member organizations.
- AQORD launched a new brand, website, and digital presence in early January 2026.
- In 2026, AQORD was one of four associations hosting *The Gathering*. *The Gathering* was a conference collaboration of the Council for Health and Human Services Ministries (CHHSM), AQORD, Methodist Ministries Network (MMN), and the Presbyterian Association of Homes & Services for the Aging (PAHSA).
- AQORD's 2027 annual conference location was announced at *The Gathering*. The next conference will be held in Greenville, SC, April 20-22.
- AQORD Compliance continues to serve both AQORD members and non-members post-merger, and will hold its annual Compliance Conference in October 2026.
- AQORD provides monthly webinars on a variety of themes, including governance & leadership, employee engagement & culture, and current trends. These webinars are free and open to anyone interested. Registration for upcoming webinars can be accessed via the AQORD website.
- Members of AQORD have access to monthly Learning Labs at no fee as part of their membership. Learning Labs are held in a virtual classroom setting and support leadership development for all levels of management. Learning Lab registration is open to non-members for a fee. Registration can be accessed on the AQORD website.
- AQORD members continue to utilize our tools and resources to support their Anabaptist and Quaker ministries.
- AQORD members enjoy access to our variety of network groups.
- AQORD Consulting hired a new staff member, Courtney Miller, as a Project Assistant in early 2026. AQORD Consulting continues to serve AQORD members and

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nonmembers in the health and human services arena, providing resources in governance, executive search, executive coaching, interim placement, and strategic planning and positioning.

- The AQORD Board of Directors and staff continue to advance diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion (JEDI) initiatives. AQORD is currently engaged in a culture audit with Cultured Enuf.
- AQORD annually offers two educational scholarships, the Elmer Ediger Memorial Scholarship and the Miller-Erb Nursing Scholarship. 2026 recipients are being reviewed and will soon be announced.
- AQORD awarded its annual Innovation Grant at *The Gathering*. This year's recipient was AQORD member Goldensun for its *Sensory & Wellness Enhancement Project for Adults with Developmental Disabilities* initiative.

For Thanksgiving and Prayer

- Continued prayer for staffing retention and recruitment. Finding and keeping qualified and compassionate employees is a significant concern for AQORD member organizations and the vulnerable populations they serve across the country.
- Prayer for the uncertainty our member organizations are facing in regard to funding and resource availability, specifically Medicaid.
- We are grateful for the financial gifts, gifts in kind, prayer, and volunteer support to our member organizations.

About Us

Born in 2025 from the merger of Friends Services Alliance (Quaker) and MHS Association (Anabaptist), AQORD brings together decades of experience in service, stewardship, and community. Our organization was shaped by Anabaptist and Quaker values – traditions that honor peace, justice, simplicity, and care for others. Our members serve senior living (retirement communities and senior housing), disabilities organizations, behavioral/mental health, hospitals, and other health & human services ministries. Together, we nurture a community grounded in shared values that foster strength through meaningful connections, excellence through continuous learning, and empowerment through quality resources.

This merger was more than strategic – it was a commitment to deeper collaboration, collective impact, and shared mission.

Submitted by Karen Lehman, President & CEO

<https://aqord.org/>

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