

Hospital Quality Guide

MAKING A MEDICAL DECISION CAN BE TOUGH

All of us face medical decisions in our lives, some can be very difficult. With so many options out there, many consumers are left feeling clueless and afraid they're making the wrong choice. Care can vary from hospital to hospital. Consumers can use the South Carolina Business Coalition on Health's Hospital Quality guide to navigate the healthcare system, helping them to identify safe, quality healthcare.

WHY PUBLISH QUALITY DATA?

Coalitions have an important role to play in quality initiatives. Coalitions:

- * Educate employers and consumers on the meaning and usefulness of quality data
- * Collect and report information that local stakeholders need
- * Improve the healthcare in the community by raising specific quality concerns

In 2007, SCBCH was named a Leapfrog Regional Rollout Leader and released its first public consumer guide on health.

MEASURING PERFORMANCE

The Leapfrog Group works with over 50 leading medical experts to identify solutions that will improve hospital quality and safety and then gather this information from hospitals around the country. The Leapfrog Hospital Quality and Safety Survey asks hospitals to report on the steps they take to improve the quality of patient care. The Leapfrog Hospital Quality and Safety Survey asks hospitals if they adhere to the following quality and safety practices:

- * **Safe Practices Score** - Hospitals should put in place procedures to reduce preventable medical mistakes.
- * **Prevent Medication Errors** - Hospitals should use computerized prescriber order entry (CPOE) systems to order medications, tests, and procedures. CPOE systems are computer systems designed to alert doctors and other prescribers to potentially serious problems with their instructions.
- * **ICU Staffing** - Hospitals should have an intensive care unit (ICU) that is staffed by doctors and other caregivers who have special training in critical care medicine. These doctors are called 'intensivists.'
- * **Managing Serious Errors** - Hospitals should have policies in place to manage serious events (or never events) such as surgery on the wrong body part or death due to contaminated drugs or devices.
- * **High Risk Treatments** - Patients should select a hospital with experience and the best results for specific procedures, surgeries or conditions. This is known as Evidence Based Hospital Referral (high risk procedures).

For a free sample of the hospital quality guide please contact:

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