

NATIONAL

Quality decoder – hospitals

Your bottom line depends on a healthy, productive workforce. That's why it's important to give your employees access to care that keeps them at their best. But how do you evaluate the quality of care they're getting? With so many providers and industry ranking organizations, it's hard to know where to find clear, reliable information.

Use our quality decoder to understand how quality is measured by the nation's leading hospital rankings. This insight can help you make a smart investment in the health of your employees.

Breaking down hospital quality

Care processes

Measures whether providers performed certain recommended actions tied to positive outcomes (for example, did a doctor prescribe a beta blocker to a patient who suffered a heart attack?). This category also includes computerized order entry, which can standardize care and reduce errors.

Care outcomes

Typically tied to mortality or readmission rates for specific procedures. Outcomes also include data such as medication adherence, surgical complications, and hospital-acquired infections.

Reputation

Patients rate hospitals based on their care experiences, such as how well caregivers communicated with them, how comfortable they were during their stay, and if they'd recommend a hospital. This category can also include feedback from doctors.

Organizational structure

Looks at whether hospitals are staffed appropriately and have the right infrastructure (proper allocation of resources, training, aligning pay to outcomes, etc.).



Hospital rankings/reports

How quality is measured

Information to consider

<p>U.S. News & World Report Best Hospitals</p> <p>This well-known news publisher provides hospital rankings across 16 adult specialties. The rankings are designed to help people determine which hospitals provide the best care for the most serious and complicated medical conditions. Consumers have access to national, state, and metro area rankings online.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ About half the hospitals in the country meet the ranking criteria. And in 2014, only 6% of these did well enough to be ranked nationally. ✓ Most helpful for patients with specialized needs or high-risk cases, not routine medical treatment. <p>➤ Go to U.S. News & World Report Best Hospitals</p>
<p>The Joint Commission's Top Performers on Key Quality Measures® program</p> <p>The Joint Commission is the country's leading hospital accreditation board. It recognizes hospitals for excellent performance on key quality measures, including heart attack, surgery, and inpatient psychiatric services. Data is self-reported, but it must be submitted through a vendor who's been evaluated and approved by The Joint Commission.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In 2013, only one-third of all accredited hospitals were recognized for their 2012 discharge data. ✓ The program doesn't measure many areas of hospital care – or any outcomes – which means you're only getting a small slice of what defines quality. <p>➤ Go to Joint Commission</p>
<p>Medicare Hospital Compare</p> <p>This government website publishes dozens of quality measures for Medicare-certified hospitals across the U.S. It also includes information about how much Medicare pays hospitals. The data is often used by private rating groups to evaluate hospitals.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can compare a maximum of three hospitals at a time. ✓ Data is available for individual measures, but there's no overall rating for each hospital. ✓ Information isn't available for some measures. <p>➤ Go to Medicare</p>
<p>The Leapfrog Group's Top Hospitals</p> <p>The Leapfrog Group is a national nonprofit organization founded and supported by employer groups. Hospitals complete an online survey to assess their performance on national measures of safety, quality, and resource utilization.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Less than 30% of hospitals in the U.S. complete the survey. ✓ Many components of the survey aren't audited, so you don't know how accurate the information is. <p>➤ Go to Leapfrog Group</p>
<p>Healthgrades America's 100 Best Hospitals™</p> <p>Private company that rates nearly all of the nation's more than 5,000 hospitals based solely on mortality and complication rates for 33 common conditions and procedures. The information is adjusted for patient risk factors that might skew results, such as age, gender, and underlying medical conditions.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hospitals can't opt in or out. ✓ The list only includes 100 hospitals. ✓ You can find patient safety and other quality information for all hospitals on the Healthgrades website. <p>➤ Go to Healthgrades</p>