

News from the



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Study: Hazleton General Hospital for the Fourth Year in a Row Ranks Among Top 5% in the Nation for Patient Safety

Hazleton, Pa. (March 9, 2011) – Hazleton General Hospital (HGH), part of the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance, was identified as a recipient of the 2011 HealthGrades Patient Safety Excellence Award™, indicating that its patient safety ratings are in the top 5% of U.S. hospitals. In a new study released today by HealthGrades, the nation's most trusted source of health care provider information, HGH is one of only 268 hospitals in the country to receive this designation. HGH is also one of only four hospitals in Pennsylvania to accomplish this for four years in a row (2008-2011).

The study finds that Medicare patients at Patient Safety Excellence Award hospitals were 46.26% less likely to experience a patient safety event during the time period studied. In addition, if all hospitals performed at this level of distinction as HGH, approximately 174,358 patient safety events and 20,688 Medicare deaths could have been avoided while saving the federal government approximately \$1.8 billion in excess healthcare costs from 2007 – 2009.

The eighth annual *HealthGrades Patient Safety in American Hospitals study* analyzed nearly 40 million hospitalization records from approximately 5,000 hospitals nationwide that participate in the Medicare program. Participation in the HealthGrades study is not voluntary, and hospitals cannot choose to opt out of the analysis.

“I am very proud to be part of an organization that is a leader in patient safety,” said Jim Edwards, president and CEO of the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance. “This is the fourth year in a row that Hazleton General Hospital has been recognized by HealthGrades with patient safety ratings in the top 5% of the nation. This doesn’t just happen by chance. It is a tribute to all of our dedicated physicians, nurses, and caregivers who are providing high quality, safe patient care.”

“We’ve seen great advances in medical care in the last few decades, but along with these miraculous advances come greater and greater risks. Hospitals like HGH have shown definitively that it is possible to provide the best in medical care while still focusing on

the safety of the patient,” said Rick May, MD, vice president of Clinical Quality Improvement at HealthGrades and co-author of the study.

The eighth annual HealthGrades Patient Safety in American Hospitals Study evaluates patient safety in U.S. hospitals. HealthGrades used Medicare inpatient data from the Medicare Provider Analysis and Review (MedPAR) database and Patient Safety Indicator software from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to calculate event rates for 13 indicators of patient safety for all of the nation’s hospitals. All analysis was based on data from 2007 to 2009 with the exception of Foreign Body Left After a Procedure which was based only on data from 2009. These indicators identify the best-performing hospitals, or Patient Safety Excellence Award™ Hospitals, which represent the top 5% of all U.S. hospitals. HealthGrades developed this award to give patients more information about choosing a hospital.

In the HealthGrades analysis, the following are the patient safety indicators studied:

- Foreign body left in after procedure
- Death in low mortality Diagnostic Related Groupings (DRGs)
- Pressure ulcer (bed sores)
- Death among surgical inpatients with serious treatable complications (previously known as “Failure to Rescue”)
- Iatrogenic pneumothorax (collapsed lung)
- Catheter-related bloodstream infections
- Post-operative hip fracture
- Post-operative hemorrhage or hematoma
- Post-operative physiologic and metabolic derangements
- Post-operative respiratory failure
- Post-operative pulmonary embolism or deep vein thrombosis
- Post-operative sepsis
- Post-operative abdominal wound dehiscence

Hazleton General Hospital, part of the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance, is a 150-bed inpatient acute care facility providing quality medical and surgical services; emergency services including an accredited primary stroke center; a family birthing center; inpatient rehabilitation, an accredited bariatric program, and a home care service. Outpatient surgical, diagnostic testing, and rehabilitative services are provided at the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center. The hospital also is the recipient of several other quality awards in heart failure, stroke, and coronary artery disease care by the American Heart Association.

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