



Hazleton General Hospital Contact

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Study: Hazleton General Hospital Among Top 5% in the Nation for Patient Safety

Hazleton, PA (March 31, 2010) – Hazleton General Hospital was identified as a recipient of the 2010 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 leading independent healthcare ratings organization. Hazleton is one of only 238 hospitals in the country to receive this designation.

Medicare patients at hospitals receiving the HealthGrades Patient Safety Excellence Award were, on average, 43% less likely to experience a patient safety event.

The seventh 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.

If all hospitals performed at the level of Patient Safety Excellence Award™ hospitals like Hazleton, approximately 218,572 patient safety events and 22,590 Medicare deaths could have been avoided while saving the U.S. approximately \$2.1 billion in excess costs from 2006 through 2008.

“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 third 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 our dedicated physicians and staff who are providing high quality, safe patient care right here, close to home.”

“On behalf of HealthGrades I’d like to congratulate Hazleton General Hospital for a track record of patient safety that is among the best in the nation,” said Rick May, MD, a vice president at HealthGrades and co-author of the study. “Hospitals like Hazleton General are setting benchmarks of superior performance that we would like to see other hospitals emulate.”

The seventh annual HealthGrades Patient Safety in American Hospitals Study applies methodology developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to identify the incidence rates of 15 patient safety indicators among Medicare patients at virtually all of the nation's nearly 5,000 nonfederal hospitals. Additionally, HealthGrades applied its methodology using 12 patient safety indicators to 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:

- Complications of anesthesia
- Death in low mortality Diagnostic Related Groupings (DRGs)
- Decubitus ulcer (bed sores)
- Death among surgical inpatients with serious treatable complications
- Iatrogenic pneumothorax (collapsed lung)
- Selected infections due to medical care
- 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
- Accidental puncture or laceration
- Transfusion reaction

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, a accredited bariatric program, and a home care service. Outpatient surgical, diagnostic testing, and rehabilitative services are provided at the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center.

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