

Find out more about the quality of a hospital's care

Hospital Compare gives you a "snap shot" of how well hospitals care for their patients. You can find out more about the quality of a hospital's care by doing the following:

- Ask your doctor if the hospital treats a lot of people who have your health problem. Ask if the hospital has a special team of health professionals who work with people with your health problem.
- Ask your doctor what he or she thinks about the quality of the hospital's care. Discuss the information you find on Hospital Compare.
- Ask the hospital what steps are taken to improve the quality of the care it gives patients. Every hospital should have an office in charge of quality.

Compare other health care providers and plans

Visit www.medicare.gov on the web to compare other health care providers, like nursing homes, home health agencies, or dialysis facilities. You can also compare health plans and prescription drug plans.

For help with general Medicare questions

- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program. For their number, visit www.medicare.gov on the web. Under "Search Tools," select "Find Helpful Phone Numbers and Websites."

To report concerns about hospital quality

Call your local Quality Improvement Organization. For their number, visit www.medicare.gov on the web. Under "Search Tools," select "Find Helpful Phone Numbers and Websites."

Medicare's Hospital Compare



Need a Hospital? Take Time to Compare

Some hospitals do a better job of taking care of patients than others.



www.medicare.gov/hospital

Hospital Compare

What is quality hospital care?

Hospitals give quality care when they give their patients the treatments that are known to get the best results. For example, studies show that people who are having a heart attack should get certain drugs called beta blockers within 24 hours of arriving at the hospital. Hospitals working to improve the quality of care they give check to see if people having a heart attack got these drugs at the right time.

Another good way to learn about the quality of care a hospital gives is to find out what other patients said about their hospital experiences. Medicare has information on the web that you can use to compare the quality of care hospitals give.

Why should I compare hospitals?

Choosing a hospital that gives quality care may help you get better faster and avoid other health problems, like infection. You can use Medicare's hospital quality information to help you choose the hospital that's best for you. You can also encourage hospitals to improve the quality of health care they give by using this information to decide where to get hospital care.

Can I really choose which hospital I want to use?

Yes. In an emergency, you should go to the nearest hospital. If you can plan ahead and you have the Original Medicare Plan, you can choose among any hospital or facility that accepts people with Medicare. If you are in a Medicare health plan, check your plan materials for a list of hospitals in your plan. Ask your doctor if he or she can treat patients at the hospitals you choose.

You can't always plan ahead when you need a hospital, but when you can, take time to compare. Use Medicare's information about hospital quality by visiting www.medicare.gov/hospital on the web.

Information about Quality on Hospital Compare

Compare hospitals in your area and around the nation based on the following:

- What a survey of hospital patients tells about a hospital's quality of care, for example, how well doctors and nurses communicate with patients and how well they manage the patient's pain
- How often hospitals give recommended treatments for heart attacks, heart failure, pneumonia, and surgery
- How a hospital's 30-day mortality (death) rate for certain conditions compares with the national death rates for these conditions
- How many people with Medicare have had certain procedures or have been treated for certain illnesses
- What Medicare pays a hospital (on average) when it does certain procedures or treats certain illnesses

There's more on Hospital Compare

Make the most of your search by using all the information on Hospital Compare like the following:

- Features like whether the hospital is accredited
- A checklist to help you compare hospitals
- Your rights as a hospital patient
- Information on how to report a complaint about the quality of your hospital care
- Other Medicare publications
- Links to related websites



www.medicare.gov/hospital