

Leapfrog Top Hospitals

Leapfrog releases its list of top hospitals annually in December

Overview

Leapfrog recognizes its top hospitals for achieving high quality, patient safety, and efficiency. It evaluates all hospitals by dividing them into five distinct categories and comparing their outcomes in six areas to their peers in that category.

Categories
General
Teaching (with more than 500 beds)
Teaching (with less than 500 beds)
Children's
Rural

Eligibility for the 'Top Hospital' list

Leapfrog considers all acute-care hospitals that submitted data on 28 individual performance measures across six domains as part of their voluntary annual Leapfrog Hospital Survey (*more information on this survey on the next page). The six domains are: medication safety; inpatient care management; infections; maternity care; inpatient surgery; and pediatric care. In 2018, hospitals could be missing data on two sub-elements within these domains (medication reconciliation and pediatric CAHPS) which were recently added to the survey, but this exception will be phased out next year.

Conditions to be named a 'Top Hospital'

To be named a top hospital by Leapfrog, hospitals have to meet six criteria (which vary slightly based on the category type). They must:

- 1. Have a Value-Based Purchasing Score ranked within the top 10% of their category**
 As part of Leapfrog's Value-Based Purchasing Program, each hospital is provided a Value Score. The score is a composite of the hospital's individual measure scores on the six domains. Each of domains is converted to a 0-100 scale where 0 denotes poor performance and 100 denotes excellent performance. The data for the VBP score comes from Leapfrog's Annual Hospital Survey.
- 2. Fully meet or achieve substantial progress on Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE)**
 Leapfrog believes that CPOE systems are vital to reducing the number of serious medication errors that occur at hospitals, specifically adverse drug events. To fully meet Leapfrog's standard for CPOE, physicians must enter at least 85% of their orders through a CPOE system and demonstrate that their inpatient system can alert physicians to at least 60% of all common, serious prescribing errors (thorough a online, timed evaluation). If the hospital doesn't fully meet this standard, they must show substantial progress in working towards it.
- 3. Fully meet the standard for ICU physician staffing**
 Leapfrog notes that mortality rates are significantly lower when ICUs are managed exclusively by board-certified intensivists. Therefore, to fulfill their ICU staffing standard, hospital's adult/pediatric ICUs must be managed or co-managed by intensivists who:
 - Are present during daytime hours and exclusively provide clinical care; or are available via telemedicine 24/7; and;
 - When not present on site or via telemedicine, return pages at least 95% of the time within five minutes or arrange for a certified physician or physician extender to reach ICU patients within five minutes when they are not present on site or via telemedicine.

Hospitals that do not have an ICU are not assessed on this standard in the evaluation of top hospitals.

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Conditions to be named a 'Top Hospital', continued

4. Comply with Leapfrog's never events policy

Leapfrog believes that, if a never event occurs, hospitals must mount a robust response. Specifically, they believe that if any one of the National Quality Forum's [list of serious reportable events](#) occurs, hospitals must respond with eight actions (four of which were added to their policy in 2018). To be named a top hospital, hospitals must have policies to follow all five original actions and have implemented policies for at least two of the new actions. The original five actions were:

- Apologize to the patient and family;
- Waive all costs related to the event and follow-up care;
- Report the event to an external agency;
- Conduct a root-cause analysis of how and why the event occurred; and
- Make a copy of this policy (containing the four actions above) available to patients.

The four actions added in 2018 were:

- Interview patients and/or families to inform root-cause analysis;
- Inform patient and/or families of actions taken by hospital to prevent similar never events in the future;
- Have a protocol to provide support for caregivers involved in never events; and
- Perform an annual review to ensure compliance with Leapfrog's never events policy for each never event that occurred.

5. Receive an 'A' Hospital Safety Grade

Hospitals that are eligible for Leapfrog's Hospital Safety Grades must have received an 'A' on the most recent Leapfrog Safety Grade rating (fall 2018).

See more about the calculation of this grade and which hospitals are eligible with our [Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade cheat sheet](#).

6. Satisfy the Top Hospital Selection Committee in a qualitative review

Hospitals must "meet the Committee's qualitative requirements for overall excellence, which includes a review of data from the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) and other publicly available information pertaining to the hospital." This review includes many elements, including that hospitals have mortality measures below CMS' average for heart attacks, heart failures, pneumonia, COPD, CABG, or stroke.

**Leapfrog's Annual Hospital Survey*

Leapfrog's survey is free for hospitals to complete and is open from April 1 to December 31. It includes nine sections encompassing medication safety, safety practice adherence, response to serious errors, and staffing in the ICU/ surgical units.

In January of each year, Leapfrog publishes a timeline of when they will extract data from hospitals' survey results and CMS. They also provide dates for a 3-week courtesy review, during which hospitals can review the data that's been collected for accuracy and raise any concerns with their help desk.