



Community Foundation Of Northwest Indiana, Inc.

Community Hospital
St. Catherine Hospital
St. Mary Medical Center

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News Release

Community Hospital and St. Catherine Hospital Among Top Five Percent in Nation According to Quality Study

Patients at HealthGrades Distinguished Hospitals for Clinical Excellence are nearly one-third less likely, to die, on average, than those admitted to all other hospitals

Munster and East Chicago, Ind. – Community Healthcare System announced today that Community Hospital and St. Catherine Hospital are among the nation’s top five percent of hospitals, according to an independent study of mortality and complication rates released today by HealthGrades, the nation’s leading healthcare ratings company.

Community Hospital in Munster and St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago are the only Indiana hospitals to be recognized in this study. The two hospitals have achieved HealthGrades’ 2008 Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence™ based on their clinical quality performance. This marks the fifth year Community Hospital has received this award, and St. Catherine Hospital’s third year.

“When we came together six years ago, we pledged to raise the quality of healthcare in Northwest Indiana by joining Community Hospital, St. Catherine Hospital and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart,” said John Gorski, Senior Vice President of Hospital Operations for the Community Healthcare System. “These awards and others we’ve received are a validation of our efforts to adopt the best practices in medicine. The people of Northwest Indiana should take great pride in knowing that our hospitals deliver the kind of patient care that matches up to the best quality hospitals in America.”

According to the HealthGrades study, patients admitted to a hospital receiving this award are, on average, 27 percent less likely to face mortality and 5 percent less likely to suffer from a major complication. This year, only 269 of the nation’s 4,971 non-federal hospitals will receive this distinction.

HealthGrades estimates that if all patients were treated at Distinguished Hospitals, 171,424 lives could have been saved and 9,671 post-operative complications could have been avoided during the three years studied.

“This study illustrates the importance of selecting a quality healthcare provider,” Gorski said. “Delivering the best outcomes isn’t dependent on one person – it takes an entire team of dedicated and skilled medical professionals and an organization that supports excellence at every level. We’re very proud of the efforts of our entire staff and physicians to deliver the highest quality healthcare in America.”

The HealthGrades study shows that Distinguished Hospitals for Clinical Excellence are improving their patient outcomes at a greater rate in more procedures and diagnoses than all other hospitals, lowering risk-adjusted mortality rates over the years 2004, 2005, 2006 by an average of 15%.

“The gap between top-performing hospitals and others persists,” said Samantha Collier, MD, HealthGrades' chief medical officer. “But Distinguished Hospitals for Clinical Excellence like Community Hospital and St. Catherine Hospital have proven that it is possible to consistently deliver top-notch medical care consistently, across a range of procedures.”

Each year, HealthGrades independently analyzes the clinical quality performance of all non-federal hospitals across the country in 27 procedures and diagnoses. In the Distinguished Hospital Study, the company reviewed tens of millions of hospitalization records from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, over the years 2004, 2005 and 2006. All hospitals that participate in the Medicare program were part of the independent study. Hospitals that receive the HealthGrades Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence are those hospitals that rank in the top five percent when all 27 individual scores are aggregated into an overall score.

