Joint Commission lists top hospital performers

For the first time, the Joint Commission has named the top performing hospitals on its key quality measures. On the list are 405 hospitals (about 14% of those accredited) that met 2 criteria for 2010:
- 95% or higher performance on a composite of all accountability measures the hospital reports
- 95% or higher performance on each accountability measure the hospital reports (assuming 30 or more cases are reported).

The 22 evidence-based measures cover surgical care as well as care for heart attacks, pneumonia, and children’s asthma.

Performance on the surgical measures for all accredited hospitals has risen dramatically to 96%, up from 82% in 2005.

Joint Commission President Mark Chassin, MD, said that the new recognition program has set a “high bar,” and only the most rigorously tested measures were selected for the program.

“We have focused on a group of measures that are uniformly excellent in meeting all of those criteria,” he said in a press call.

The hospital-specific data itself is not new, having been available for some time on the Joint Commission’s Quality Check website and Medicare’s Hospital Compare website.

Naming the top performers is consistent with the public’s demand for transparency and the pay-for-performance programs of the federal and state governments as well as many private payers, he said.

Asked why some nationally renowned medical centers are not on the list, Dr Chassin said larger hospitals “have a lot more work to do” than smaller ones, especially if they are reporting on multiple measures. On the other hand, “they have more resources to do the work.” He said the measures might not be a priority, “or they might be happy with 85% performance.”

He said he hoped the recognition program would motivate hospitals “to do even better.”

Small and rural hospitals are over-represented among top performers, and academic medical centers are under-represented, he acknowledged.

That indicates “you don’t have to be a big hospital to do well. And if you’re a big

Surgical care measure results

Overall 2010 compliance for Joint Commission surgical care measures.

- Surgical care composite: 96.4%
- Antibiotics given within 1 hour before first surgical cut: 97.4%
- Appropriate prophylactic antibiotics: 97.8%
- Stopping antibiotics within 24 hours: 95.7%
- Cardiac patients with 6 am blood glucose measurement: 94.1%
- Patient with appropriate hair removal: 99.7%
- Beta-blocker patients who received a beta-blocker perioperatively: 94.4%
- Prescribing venous thromboembolism (VTE) medicine/treatment: 95.2%
- Receiving VTE medicine/treatment: 93.7%
- Urinary catheter removal: 91.3%

Source: Joint Commission. Improving America’s Hospitals, 2011.
hospital, that doesn’t mean you do well without paying attention to processes of care that can be done extremely well and consistently over long periods.

“You have to work at it to get the systems to support excellent performance.”

**Performance counts in accreditation**
How well hospitals perform on the accountability measures is being woven into the accreditation process. Beginning January 1, 2012, accredited hospitals will have to meet a target composite score of 85% on the accountability measures. The requirement does not apply to critical access hospitals. ✴

*The top performer list and report are at www.jointcommission.org/accreditation/top_performers.aspx*