




**THOMSON**  
**TOP HOSPITALS**  
*National*  
2007

A Guide to the  
Thomson 100 Top Hospitals®:  
National Benchmarks  
for Success  
**2007**



Why your local hospital received this prestigious award  
and what it means to you and the community.

## What measures identify hospitals that perform well hospital-wide?

The 100 Top Hospitals National award is based on a set of measures that reflect highly effective performance across the whole organization, including board members, medical staff, management, and nursing.

These include:

- **Patient outcomes:** Survival rates for all patients, plus low rates of surgical complications like infections and severe bleeding after surgery.
- **Patient safety:** Avoiding unwanted events, like respiratory failure, infections, and unexpected deaths in low-risk diseases, which occur infrequently, but which all hospitals are working to reduce.
- **National treatment standards (core measures):** A set of basic care practices that all heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, and surgery patients should receive. Core measures were developed by the National Quality Forum as minimum basic standards. A hospital is scored only on those core measures that the hospital reports publicly. Visit [www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov](http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov) and [www.qualitycheck.org](http://www.qualitycheck.org) to see all hospitals' specific core measures scores.
- **Efficiency:** Length of patient stay and average expense. In the best hospitals, all parts of the organization work together to do the right thing at the right time. When this happens, patients return to their daily lives faster and costs are usually lower.
- **Financial stability:** Profit and cash-to-debt ratio. A high-performing hospital must be well-managed financially so it can attract the best healthcare professionals, acquire new technology, and expand services to improve results for patients. The top-performing hospitals must have enough cash to pay down their bills and must generate a surplus to be financially stable and invest in the future.



## What is the 100 Top Hospitals National award?

The Thomson 100 Top Hospitals®: National Benchmarks for Success award names 100 hospitals that achieve the highest national score based on the hospital's combined rank on eight separate measures of hospital performance that affect patients and the community.

Having a 100 Top Hospitals National award-winner in the community means that:

- Patients are measurably less likely to have a complication, adverse patient safety event, or die unnecessarily.
- Patients are more likely to receive care efficiently at a reasonable comparative cost.
- The community can rely on the hospital as a well-managed major employer that will continue to invest in newer technology and services needed by the community.

Thomson produces these benchmarks every year to announce the new level of performance that can be achieved and to help other hospitals set goals for higher performance.



## Why does hospital-wide performance matter when I am being treated for only one disease?

When a patient is treated in a hospital, many specialized services are provided to the patient by many skilled professionals. To make sure the patient receives the best care, the hospital needs to be a well-managed organization to coordinate all the tests and treatments received. When all the departments and services of a hospital are working in concert, patients benefit because measurably better outcomes can be achieved safely, efficiently, and

at comparatively reasonable cost. These across-the-board results are achieved by the 100 Top Hospitals award winners.

For the patient, this means this hospital is significantly more likely to provide dependable, high quality care because doing the right thing at the right time matters to everyone in the hospital — not just doctors.

## If this award is for hospitals, what does it mean to patients?

Although there are no perfect hospitals, research has shown that teamwork across an organization produces a greater likelihood of better outcomes, adherence to standards, and more reasonable costs. Patients can feel comfortable that a 100 Top Hospitals National award-winning hospital is performing well against national standards. Its board, management, doctors, nurses, and hospital employees work together to constantly measure, review, and improve performance to make it a good place to receive care.

## Does this mean that I should choose this hospital when I need care?

*Hospital choice is a complex decision that requires consultation with a physician about the illness and the type of treatment best for the patient. This study does not address all possible issues that are important to the patient.*

The 100 Top Hospitals National award-winners are selected by an objective, statistical comparison of hospital-wide performance using publicly available data.

A 100 Top Hospitals National winner, compared with similar hospitals on the measures listed, has set national standards for organization-wide performance in the year before the award. These award-winning hospitals have set the new standard to which other hospitals can aspire.

## Why is it so difficult to win the 100 Top Hospitals National award?

There are two reasons:

1. This award uses only statistical information to select the top performers from more than 3,000 hospitals across the country. The 100 Top Hospitals National award winners must perform well across many measures, not just one. Your hospital is matched only to similar hospitals before computing and comparing scores to choose the top performers.



2. The measures in the study change, usually every year, based on new and higher standards of care. For example, the survival rate of hospitalized patients has risen every year for more than a decade, thus raising the standard for patient survival. To win, a hospital must keep up with the new standards of performance and develop new techniques to achieve better performance.

## What does it mean if my hospital doesn't win again next year?

Winners of the 100 Top Hospitals National award are like athletes who win a national championship one year. And like a championship team — they may not win the second year, but they usually are still extremely high performers. Research by scholars has shown that hospitals that win this award remain very high performers in the year after winning — usually within the top 20 percent of all hospitals.

It is exceedingly difficult to be selected as a national benchmark hospital every year. Although several hospitals have won this award 10 times or more, no U.S. hospital has won this award every year since its inception in 1993. It is difficult to win this award even once and should be a point of pride in the hospital and the community.

100 Top Hospitals research has shown that hospitals that win this award three or more times have particularly high levels of performance over many years.

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## Who performs the 100 Top Hospitals studies and why?

Thomson Healthcare, a national healthcare information company, performs the study annually at its own expense to share the new standards being set by the hospital industry, enabling other hospitals to improve their own hospital-wide performance. Thomson Healthcare uses only public Medicare data, so that all hospitals can be measured and the most reliable standards reported. Only 100 hospitals, selected from five categories (major teaching, teaching, and large, medium, and small community hospitals), are named.

Thomson uses its own statisticians, physicians, and hospital industry experts to determine criteria and select the top-performing hospitals.

Thomson Healthcare, a business of The Thomson Corporation (NYSE: TOC, TSX: TOC), is the leading provider of decision support solutions that help organizations across the healthcare industry improve clinical and business performance.

Thomson Healthcare maintains the nation's largest healthcare databases, with data representing 78 percent of all hospital discharges. Thomson Healthcare also produces the 100 Top Hospitals®: Cardiovascular Benchmarks for Success and the 100 Top Hospitals®: Performance Improvement Leaders awards.

## How can I learn more?

To learn more about the 100 Top Hospitals award, including lists of all award winners and details on the measures used, visit [www.100tophospitals.com](http://www.100tophospitals.com).



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