



FEDERATION OF AMERICAN CONSUMERS AND TRAVELERS - NEWS RELEASE -

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Ratings for America's Hospitals Now Available on Web

EDWARDSVILLE, IL, July 17, 2009 -New information has been added to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) Hospital Compare Web site. This site (www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov) reports how frequently patients return to a hospital after being discharged, a possible indicator of how well the facility did the first time around.

Hospital Compare data show that for patients admitted to a hospital for heart attack treatment, 19.9 percent of them will return to the hospital within 30 days, 24.5 percent of patients admitted for heart failure will return to the hospital within 30 days, and 18.2 percent of patients admitted for pneumonia will return to the hospital within 30 days.

CMS has been tracking the outcomes of hospital care since 2007 when Hospital Compare debuted 30-day mortality rates for heart attack and heart failure. Thirty-day mortality rates for pneumonia were added to the Web site in 2008.

This year, CMS has changed the way it calculates the mortality data in an attempt to provide better information to consumers. In 2007 and 2008, only one year of claims data were used to compute mortality, while the rates added to the Web site today encompass three years of claims data (from July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2008). Although this means that consumers cannot compare data from last year's rate with this year's rate, it is hoped that the expanded data set will provide a clearer picture of how well hospitals are performing.

Using the three-year data method, CMS estimates that the national 30-day mortality rate for patients originally admitted for heart attack care is 16.6 percent. For heart failure patients, the national 30-day mortality rate is 11.1 percent, and for pneumonia patients the national rate is 11.5 percent.

The Hospital Compare Web site will show a hospital's mortality or readmissions rate is "Better than," "No different from," or "Worse than" the U.S. national rate.

Hospital Compare also includes 10 measures that capture patient satisfaction with hospital care, 25 process of care measures, and two children's asthma care measures. The site also features information about the number of selected elective hospital procedures provided to patients and what Medicare pays for those services.

The information contained on Hospital Compare is available for consumers to use in making health care decisions, but consumers should gather information from multiple sources when choosing a hospital. In an emergency situation, it is generally recommended that patients go to the nearest, most easily accessible facility.

This news release is issued as a service of the Federation of American Consumers and Travelers (FACT). FACT was formed under the not-for-profit corporation laws of the District of Columbia in 1984, and currently serves more than 1 million consumers nationwide. Additional information on FACT may be found in the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, and by visiting the association's Web site (www.usafact.org). Informative, unbiased news bulletins are regularly disseminated by FACT to help its members remain current on matters which might seriously impact their lives. In addition to publishing consumer-related reports, the association provides more than 30 benefits for its members, ranging from [medical insurance](#) and [dental discounts](#) to [prescription drug savings](#), [scholarships](#) and [consumer information](#). FACT's administrative office is located at 318 Hillsboro Avenue, Edwardsville, IL 62025.