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**New Web Site Helps Patients Shop for Hospital Care  
Based On Quality and Price**  
*CMS Web Site Features Updated and More Robust Information to Help  
Consumers with Their Health Care Choices*

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), today posted new survey information at the Hospital Compare consumer Web site offering consumers more insight about the hospitals in their communities.

In addition to adding the new information from Medicare patients about their hospital stays, CMS is adding information about the number of certain elective hospital procedures provided to those patients and what Medicare pays for those services. For the first time, consumers have the three critical elements -- quality information, patient satisfaction survey information, and pricing information for specific procedures -- they need to make effective decisions about the quality and value of the health care available to them through local hospitals.

“By enhancing these resources, Medicare is strengthening its commitment to use the transparency of quality information to help give consumers more choice about the quality of their health care and how they may be able to lower their health care costs,” HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt said. “To achieve goals around providing consumers with the information necessary, and the incentive, to choose hospitals based on quality and value, HHS is continuing work with partners such as the Hospital Quality Alliance to drive quality up and the cost down.”

The Hospital Compare Web site currently provides information on 26 quality measures, which include process of care and outcome measures. Process of care measures report how well a hospital provides care and outcome measures reflect the results of the care that beneficiaries received while in the hospital. With the addition of the 10 new patient experience of care topics, consumers will now be able to get a better picture of the quality of care delivered at their local hospitals.

“Medicare beneficiaries tell us that just like the information they receive about other products and services they consume, they want to know what their neighbors are saying about the care they received while in the hospital; they want to know how much it costs; and they want to know about the quality of that care. We are now sharing that information,” said CMS Acting Administrator Kerry Weems. “The nation’s hospitals and others who work with patients share our goal of improving the quality of care for all. Our quality improvement efforts include a wide-ranging set of tools and data to do just that.”

The patient experience of care information on Hospital Compare is part of the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Hospital Survey, known as HCAHPS. HCAHPS is the first national, standardized, publicly reported survey of patient perspectives on care they

experience during a hospital stay. More than 2,500 hospitals around the country have been collecting information from a random sample of discharged patients who were treated for a wide range of conditions between October 2006 and June 2007. These patients were asked about their experiences of care (including topics such as responsiveness of hospital staff and pain management) and how they rate the hospital overall. CMS worked with the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and with support from members of the Hospital Quality Alliance (HQA) to develop the HCAHPS survey.

The new pricing and volume information at Hospital Compare looks at the acute care hospital payments Medicare made for treatment of beneficiaries with certain illnesses from October 2005 through September 2006. This information reflects what Medicare pays the hospital for these services, not what beneficiaries pay. CMS has posted this information for the public to see the cost to Medicare of treating beneficiaries with certain illnesses in their community. A better understanding of the cost of care leads to more informed decision making, one more way beneficiaries can help improve their health and support the longer term financial health of Medicare.

This summer, CMS will add an additional outcome mortality measure for pneumonia, which will accompany the mortality measures for heart attack and heart failure that are currently posted on the Hospital Compare Web site. CMS will also provide more information in the display of the mortality measures with the ability to focus on the mortality measure rates, interval estimates and number of cases. Also, two pediatric asthma measures that were collected by The Joint Commission, a national accrediting organization, will now be posted on the Hospital Compare Web site.

The updated information is part of the public health effort to strengthen consumer choice and create incentives to motivate providers to provide better care for all Americans. These enhancements to the current provider compare resources also implement the four cornerstones in President Bush's August, 2006, Executive Order 13410 promoting value driven health care by ensuring transparent quality and price information, interoperable health information technology and incentives for high-quality, efficient health care delivery.

"Hospitals have already stepped up their efforts to improve the care they provide based on the quality information that has been publicly reported over the past few years," said Weems. "This new information should help accelerate that process as more and more people pay attention to this important information that is now available to the public. Collectively, the quality, patient satisfaction, volume, and pricing information will help us assure patients and their families that they have the information they need about the care they are receiving while serving as a catalyst to continue to improve the care delivered in our nation's hospitals."

To access the Hospital Compare Web site, please visit: [www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov](http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov). Other provider compare Web sites are available through [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or directly at [www.medicare.gov/NHCompare](http://www.medicare.gov/NHCompare) for nursing home information, [www.medicare.gov/HHCompare](http://www.medicare.gov/HHCompare) for information about home health agencies, and [www.medicare.gov/Dialysis](http://www.medicare.gov/Dialysis) for information about End Stage Renal Disease facilities. CMS also provides comparative resources about Medicare Advantage ([www.medicare.gov/MPPF](http://www.medicare.gov/MPPF)) and Medicare prescription drug plans ([www.medicare.gov/MPDPF](http://www.medicare.gov/MPDPF)).

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