

Medicare announces updated, enhanced tools for patients to compare hospitals and nursing homes

Two websites that help Americans make informed choices about hospitals and nursing homes have been redesigned and will make more information available to the public, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced today.

The two sites – [Hospital Compare](#) and [Nursing Home Compare](#) – have been enhanced to make navigation easier by users, and have added important new comparison tools like findings from nursing home inspections.

“These enhanced tools give patients, their families, and caregivers the ability to make an informed decision on where to seek care by looking at how well hospitals and nursing homes are performing on important quality measures, and” said Acting CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner. “Anyone looking to compare hospitals or nursing homes – not just those on Medicare – can take advantage of these websites.”

Both sites contain important data on how well these facilities perform on quality measures – such as the frequency of infections that develop in the hospital, how often patients have to be readmitted to the hospital, and the percentage of nursing residents who report having moderate to severe pain while staying in the nursing homes. Researchers will now be able to access the data on both of these sites through mobile ready applications.

On both websites, navigation has been improved for consumers, who will find large and easy to use maps for pinpointing hospitals, and new search functionalities that allow the user to input the name of a hospital. Glossaries and web resources have been enhanced to make the information easier to understand.

“These new updates to the Hospital and the Nursing Home Compare websites are the next stage of transparently sharing data to drive improvement in our health system,” said Patrick Conway, chief medical officer for CMS.

In addition, new information is available on each of the websites. Updates to Nursing Home Compare include:

- Narratives that detail specific findings from inspections of nursing home facilities;
- Two new measures that report a nursing home's use of antipsychotic medications;
- Updated data for quality measures previously available on the site; and
- Information on nursing home ownership available thanks to the Affordable Care Act.

Additions to Hospital Compare include:

- Two new measures that cover potential health risks of imaging services, such as exposure to unnecessary radiation; and
- Updated data for existing quality measures.

These two consumer tools are highly popular with patients, their families, and caregivers. In the first half of 2012 there were over 1.2 million visits to the Hospital Compare site, and over 500,000 visits to Nursing Home Compare. The sites can be found online at www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/ and www.medicare.gov/nhcompare/. The Eldercare Locator can be found at www.eldercare.gov. This public service of the Administration on Community Living is a nationwide service that connects older adults and their caregivers with information on senior services.