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**Do Iowa Hospitals Make the Grade When It Comes to Patient Safety?**

**Iowa Health Buyers Alliance Reacts to National Update of the Hospital Safety Score**

**Johnston, Iowa November 28, 2012 –** Hospitals across the U.S. are showing improvement when it comes to patient safety, but according to the latest release of the standard public score regarding patient safety, more work needs to be done. The updated Hospital Safety Scores – the A, B, C, D or F score assigned to U.S. general hospitals based on infections, injuries, and medical and medication errors – were released today by [The Leapfrog Group](http://www.leapfroggroup.org/), an independent, national not-for-profit organization of employer purchasers of health care and the nation’s leading experts on patient safety. Scores were assigned to twenty-four (24) hospitals in Iowa, with seven (7) receiving an “A,” the highest score.

“Iowans should be proud of the hospitals who achieved ‘A’ Hospital Safety Scores,” said Rebecca Dunk of Cedar Rapids, Chair of the Greater Iowa Leapfrog Group Regional Rollout. The seven “A” hospitals are: Genesis Medical Center-Davenport, Grinnell Regional Medical Center, Mary Greeley Medical Center of Ames, Mercy Medical Center of Cedar Rapids, Mercy Medical Center of Dubuque, Spencer Municipal Hospital, and Trinity Bettendorf. “We will continue to work with other hospitals in our communities so more local hospitals can earn ‘A’s,’ she said.

The Hospital Safety Score highlights the country’s safest hospitals and warns against those with unacceptable safety records in order to save lives and bring attention to our nation’s silent epidemic of deaths and injuries as a result of medical errors.

“We were pleased that many hospitals used the Hospital Safety Score to identify areas for improvement,” said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group, which administers the Hospital Safety Score. “The employers and other purchasers of care that are part of Leapfrog are looking for rapid reduction in the errors, accidents, and injures that are killing and harming people unnecessarily, and we are pleased to see that change is happening. More needs to be done, and faster, but we congratulate the hospitals that are leading the way.”

To advance the market for change, and in conjunction with this round of updated Hospital Safety Scores, Leapfrog is also announcing:

* **The Hospital Safety Score mobile app**: The app uses GPS tracking to advise users on the grades of nearby hospitals, or permit searching in other areas. To download the free app, visit [www.hospitalsafetyscore.org](http://www.hospitalsafetyscore.org).
* **Advice from the Altarum Institute on how employers can and do use hospital ratings:** Altarum Institute ([www.altarum.org](https://webmail.leapfroggroup.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=45ee19849fd540fb846d1b879b17e89c&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.altarum.org)) integrates objective research and client-centered consulting skills to deliver comprehensive, systems-based solutions that improve health and health care. Altarum is issuing a white paper on how employers and other large purchasers of health care use information from Leapfrog and the Hospital Safety Score, as well as other public ratings, to improve the experience of care for their employees.
* **The Leapfrog Group’s new recommendation for people hurt by errors, accidents, and injuries to get action:** Leapfrog recommends people contact ProPublica, which has set up a special hotline and interactive web portal for the Hospital Safety Score, enabling people to recount their experiences for researchers, journalists, and policymakers

“The people in Iowa should use the Hospital Safety Score as one important piece of information in choosing a hospital for their families and as a tool to raise questions with their doctors,” said Garth Bowen, Co-chair of the Iowa Health Buyers Alliance. “We will use the Hospital Safety Score in Iowa in all of the following ways:

* Educate the public about patient safety and taking precautions when admitted to a hospital
* Work with physicians, nurses and other clinicians to improve patient safety in our community
* Work with policymakers to hold hearings and advance legislative options to reduce deaths by infection, injury and error
* Communicate with hospitals and health plans to set goals for getting to straight ‘As’ in Iowa
* Work with our employer and other purchaser members on contracting, value-based purchasing, benefits design, and employee educational programs to spur safety improvements in our hospitals.”

Calculated under the guidance of a nine-member Blue Ribbon Panel of patient safety experts, the Hospital Safety Score uses 26 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to produce a single score representing a hospital’s overall performance in keeping patients safe from preventable harm and medical errors.

This November 2012 release of the Hospital Safety Score is a planned update of the June 2012 initial release. Several hospitals showed improvement, but hospitals that are a hazard to patients received an appropriate D or F score instead of a “Score Pending” assignment. The June 2012 “Score Pending” assignment provided those institutions a six-month window for improvement.

For more information on the Hospital Safety Score, or to find out the score of your local hospital, visit [www.hospitalsafetyscore.org](http://www.hospitalsafetyscore.org).

**About The Iowa Health Buyers Alliance**; The IHBA ([www.ihbaonline.org](http://www.ihbaonline.org)) is an association of health care consumers and purchasers working together for better health, better health care and better value. We support a patient centered health system, improved care quality, wellness and increased transparency and public disclosure.Our members include public and private employers, labor organizations and consumer groups**.**

**About The Leapfrog Group**

The Hospital Safety Score is an initiative of The Leapfrog Group ([www.leapfroggroup.org](http://www.leapfroggroup.org)), a national nonprofit organization using the collective leverage of large purchasers of health care to initiate breakthrough improvements in the safety, quality, and affordability of health care for Americans. The flagship Leapfrog Hospital Survey allows purchasers to structure their contracts and purchasing to reward the highest performing hospitals. The Leapfrog Group was founded in November 2000 with support from the Business Roundtable and national funders, and is now independently operated with support from its purchaser and other members.

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