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PA hospital quality Web site adds data, ups traffic

By: [Joe Carlson / HITS staff writer](#)

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Pennsylvanians looking to find out which hospitals have the quietest rooms at night or most reliable rates of prescribing aspirin to heart attack patients have begun using a new hospital-comparison tool online in larger numbers.

More than 25,000 visitors have logged on to the Pennsylvania Health Care Quality Alliance's hospital quality [Web site](#) since it was launched in March. That user traffic comes as a new alliance survey of healthcare consumers reports that more than three-quarters of respondents agree they need to take active steps to avoid poor medical care.

The site publishes detailed results of two hospital consumer surveys as well as quality indicators for heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia and infection prevention. Users can search for data by hospital or geographic area. The Web site includes data for all of the state's 165 acute-care hospitals, excepting a handful that are too new or too small to have sufficient data to report, alliance spokesman Richard Wells said.

"Although patients continue to rely mainly on their physicians, friends and personal experience in choosing a hospital, we are convinced that Web sites like [pahealthcarequality.org](#) will continue to gain greater awareness and acceptance over time," Erik Muther, executive director of the alliance, said in a news release.

An alliance survey released Oct. 22 found that just one-third of the 800 residents surveyed had used hospital quality data in choosing where to go for care, even though more than half said hospitals differ in their quality, and three-quarters said that consumers need to take their own active steps to avoid poor care.