

Cancer Care Quality Data Now Available to PA Consumers

Pennsylvania Health Care Quality Alliance collaborated with the American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer to voluntarily share cancer measure data.

(November 21, 2013 HARRISBURG, PA) For the first time, cancer care quality measures for Pennsylvania hospitals accredited by the American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer (CoC) are publically available. The quality measures were released today by the Pennsylvania Health Care Quality Alliance (PHCQA) on its website, www.pahealthcarequality.org. This is the first such release in the country.

As part of a statewide transparency initiative, PHCQA teamed up with the American College of Surgeons to provide CoC-accredited hospitals in Pennsylvania with the opportunity to report cancer measures endorsed by the National Quality Forum and to recognize facilities that achieved CoC-accreditation.

“Pennsylvania has a long history of leading the way in terms of transparency of health care data,” said Erik Muther, Executive Director of the Alliance. “Sharing cancer care metrics allows members of the public to see which hospitals are providing high-quality cancer care, which supports informed decision-making.”

The cancer data includes three breast and two colon cancer measures. Breast and colon cancers were chosen in part because of their prevalence. According to the American Cancer Society, breast cancer is most common cancer in women, and colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in men and women combined in the United States.

“This release of information supports PHCQA’s commitment to improving health care in Pennsylvania by increasing awareness and access to user-friendly, unbiased health care quality information,” said Frank Trembulak, chief operating officer of Geisinger Health System and chair of PHCQA's board of directors.

Demand for health care quality information continues to grow. Muther noted that according to a Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS) study in 2008, nearly 40 percent of the U.S. population has searched for cancer information at some point, and that the Internet is the most frequently used source of cancer information. “More transparency will be necessary in order to move our health care system to be more ‘value’, rather than ‘volume’ oriented. Using a multi-stakeholder approach from start to finish increases the likelihood that information will be viewed as reliable and trustworthy,” said Muther.

About PHCQA

The Pennsylvania Health Care Quality Alliance is a nonprofit coalition of health care organizations working together collaboratively to improve the quality of health care for the



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people of Pennsylvania. PHCQA's work focuses on two key areas: promoting responsible public reporting of health care information and supporting Pennsylvania health care providers' ability to deliver quality and value. Alliance members include The Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP), which represents more than 225 hospitals and health systems across the state; the Pennsylvania Medical Society; the Delaware Valley Healthcare Council of HAP; the Hospital Council of Western Pennsylvania; Geisinger Health Plan; UPMC Health Plan; Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania; Capital BlueCross; Highmark; Independence Blue Cross; and Pfizer.

About The Commission on Cancer

The Commission on Cancer (CoC) is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival and quality of life for cancer patients through standard-setting, prevention, research, education, and the monitoring of comprehensive quality care. Established by the American College of Surgeons in 1922, the multidisciplinary CoC establishes standards to ensure quality, multidisciplinary, and comprehensive cancer care delivery in health care settings; conducts surveys in health care settings to assess compliance with those standards; collects standardized data from CoC-accredited health care settings to measure cancer care quality; uses data to monitor treatment patterns and outcomes and enhance cancer control and clinical surveillance activities, and develops effective educational interventions to improve cancer prevention, early detection, cancer care delivery, and outcomes in health care settings.

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