

Wisconsin Hospital Association: Commonwealth ranks Wisconsin health system performance 11th best in nation

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MADISON (March 17, 2017) — A newly released scorecard by the [Commonwealth Fund](#) ranked Wisconsin the 11th best state in the country based on health system performance, with several communities here ranking in the [top-quintile](#) nationally.

The Scorecard ranks every state and the District of Columbia across five broad areas: health care access, prevention and treatment, avoidable hospital use and cost, healthy lives and equity. Wisconsin ranked in the top or second quartile in 35 of the 44 measures that were used in the ranking.

Using the most recent data available, the *Scorecard* also ranked 306 regional health care markets known as “hospital referral regions” on four main dimensions of performance encompassing 36 measures. There are five measures of hospital care and a mix that includes nursing home, ambulatory and population health.

Appleton ranked 5th highest in the nation among the 306 U.S. communities included in the report, with Madison (13th), La Crosse (15th) and Green Bay (19th) scoring in the top quintile. Wausau, Neenah, Marshfield and Milwaukee ranked in the top quartile. Milwaukee topped more than 231 health care markets across the country.

“Wisconsin’s outstanding performance on this scorecard is not a surprise given the clinical excellence of the health care professionals working within our health systems,” said WHA President/CEO Eric Borgerding, “Our strong performance is bolstered by the high degree of care integration in our state and the continuing commitment of our hospitals, health systems and care providers to quality improvement.”

Wisconsin hospitals and health systems are closely aligned with physicians, long-term care facilities, home health and often health plans to ensure that care is coordinated across settings. This leads to not just better quality care, but better outcomes and ultimately better value for the dollars spent on health care, according to Borgerding.

Readmissions continue to decrease in Wisconsin, one of the measures that was included in the Commonwealth report.

“Our hospitals and health systems continue to make progress in reducing readmissions, which aligns to the work that WHA has been doing with members over the past four years through our own project,” according to Kelly Court, WHA chief quality officer. “This year we joined with Illinois and Michigan to form the Great Lakes Partners for Patients collaborative to extend our learning network and ability to collaborate with hundreds of hospitals and health systems in three states. We believe that collaboration is the best way to speed the adoption of best practices and improve patient care.”

The report noted that the most pervasive improvements in health system performance occurred where policymakers and health system leaders created programs, incentives, or collaborations to ensure access to care and improve the quality and efficiency of care.

“Every hospital and health system in the state is collaborating with community partners to raise the health status of Wisconsin’s residents, which in turn will help moderate increases in health care costs,” Borgerding said. “Wisconsin providers are moving forward and not waiting for changes in the reimbursement system that recognize and pay for prevention. They are helping people now to stay well and avoid encounters with the health care system, which will create healthier communities that will attract economic development in our state, as well.”

