

May 8, 2014

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Two watchwords can make the difference between life and death for our patients: *Quality* and *Safety*. And I'm pleased to say we're doing our part to make sure that these two core critical values are top-of-mind at NCH.

Last week, Leapfrog Group—a respected independent industry watchdog that rates hospitals on how well they protect patients from accidents, errors, injuries and infections—named NCH the only healthcare system in southwest Florida to receive an “A” rating for safety and quality. Other hospitals and systems in Lee and Collier Counties either declined to be rated or had grades ranging from a “B” to a “D.”

(http://www.leapfroggroup.org/cp?frmbmd=cp_listings&find_by=zip&zip=34102&radius=50)

In announcing the NCH designation, Leah Binder, president & CEO of Leapfrog, said, “*Safety should come first for our families when we pick a hospital, because errors and infections are common and deadly. No hospital is perfect, but we congratulate the Board, clinicians, administration, and staff of the NCH Healthcare System for achieving an ‘A’ and showing us that you made the well-being of your patients your top priority.*”

Doug Ardoin, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, NCH Healthcare System, said, “*We are constantly measuring and working to improve quality and patient safety at NCH. To be recognized by Leapfrog as the only ‘A’ rated hospital in southwest Florida is a tribute to the work of our entire team.*”

NCH was also recognized with the highest rating of three stars by the Society of Thoracic Surgery (STS) for open heart bypass surgery and aortic valve replacement. That placed us among the top 10% in the nation. Drs. **Robert Pascotto, Jr.** and **Dennis Stapleton** lead a team of outstanding nurses, surgical technicians, and support staff from the NCH Heart Institute and the NCH Healthcare System. They care for patients with competence and compassion, and greatly deserve this STS distinction.

STS has taken the lead in public reporting by providing easy to understand, *clinical data* on heart surgery outcomes to the public. STS Public Reporting Online enables STS National Database participants to voluntarily report to each other and the public their heart surgery [composite star ratings](#) and the component ratings from which those are derived. Reporting outcomes based on clinical, or medical, data is more accurate and more useful than outcomes based on administrative data that lack critical clinical information about patients.

Healthcare is becoming both more transparent and metric, and we embrace this new openness. As **Michele Thoman**, our Chief Nursing Officer, puts it, “*We are supportive of efforts that facilitate transparency and public reporting of safety information. NCH is committed to ongoing and continuous improvements in the delivery of quality patient care.*”

Quality and *safety* can be measured and compared, so that patients, families, insurance companies, and anyone else interested in healthcare can make better-informed choices. One reason NCH is the healthcare market leader, with one in eight of our patients coming from outside our five-county region, is that we're proud of our team and accomplishments and encourage people to compare our performance with that of our competitors.

Respectfully,



Allen S. Weiss, M.D., President and CEO

P.S. DO YOU HAVE A COLLEAGUE OR FRIEND WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THESE UPDATES?

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