

HEALTHCARE BLUEBOOK QUALITY RATINGS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About Bluebook Quality Ratings

While hospitals perform many different procedures, most hospitals do not have the same level of quality in every clinical area. The Bluebook quality ratings are designed to provide meaningful quality information that employees can use to determine which facilities will provide the greatest opportunity for the best possible outcome for their specific procedure. Our quality ratings compare each hospital against all other US hospitals measured in a specific clinical area.

Are there significant differences in inpatient quality?

Yes. Much like price variability, there is significant variability in quality across hospitals. It is imperative that the patient understand the idea that quality varies. This ensures that they choose a hospital facility that provides the best outcome (e.g. successful operation, low infection rates, good patient satisfaction).

Because quality may vary at the *same hospital for different procedures* or clinical categories, Bluebook's solution displays quality at the clinical category. This is an important differentiator of Bluebook's quality ratings.

Aren't all hospitals good at all things?

No, very few hospitals are good at all things. Hospitals use their "brand" to attract patients - it is important that the patient understand the impact of quality for their specific procedure. For example, Cleveland Clinic is in the top 25% for certain cardiac procedures. However, their outcomes for other procedures may not be as good.

What is the data source for the quality information?

The data source incorporates the most recent three years of federal fiscal year claims data from Hospital Quality Alliance (HQA), Hospital Compare All Payer Database for core process of care measures, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Studies (CMS) and Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) Database for patient satisfaction measures.

Is CMS data relevant for people of all ages?

Yes. Medicare (CMS) is a good proxy because it represents 50% of all discharges, many of which are higher risk patients. Data indicates, if a hospital has good quality for a high risk patient, the quality will be similar across all risk levels. Our data source provides the pattern of quality and removes bias associated with age and comorbid conditions.

What are the clinical categories?

There are more than 30 clinical categories:

Overall Hospital Care	Heart Attack Treatment	Spinal Fusion
Overall Medical Care	Heart Failure Treatment	Spinal Surgery
Overall Surgical Care	Hip Fracture	Stroke Care
Cancer Care	Interventional Coronary Care	Transplant of Bone Marrow
Cardiac Care	Joint Replacement	Transplant of Heart
Cardiac Surgery (Major)	Major Bowel Procedures	Transplant of Kidney
Carotid Artery Surgery	Neurological Care	Transplant of Liver
Coronary Bypass Surgery	Neuro-Surgery (Major)	Transplant of Lung
Gall Bladder Removal	Orthopedic Care	Trauma Care
Gastrointestinal Care	Orthopedic Surgery (Major)	Vascular Care
GI Hemorrhage	Pneumonia	Women's Health
General Surgery	Pulmonary Care	

How many procedures does this represent on the Bluebook site?

The Bluebook tool currently provides quality ratings for over 200 procedures. Future updates will include quality ratings for more procedures.

Why clinical categories are important v. an overall hospital score:

Accrediting organizations often provide hospitals with a letter grade (A-F) at the *overall* level, and not at the specific procedure level. This may be misleading to the patient, as the hospital may not perform well for their specific procedure.

Why don't outpatient facilities have quality ratings?

Sufficient data does not exist for outpatient facilities to create quality ratings.

What factors are included in Bluebook's quality information?

The Bluebook rating is calculated for each clinical area by combining a hospital's performance in five areas: Patient Complications, Patient Safety, Mortality, Core Process Metrics and Patient Satisfaction.

Is the Bluebook quality rating a guarantee that I will have a positive outcome?

The quality ratings highlight which facility has a greater probability of having a positive outcome. The quality score is a reliability score relative to every other hospital in the U.S. - it is not a guarantee.

How old is the data used to create the quality rating?

Claims data is released annually for the previous year. A rolling three years of data is used in order to normalize anomalies in the data (smaller segments of data are not statistically relevant).

How are the quality ratings displayed:

- ✓+ A Green Check-Plus rating indicates that the hospital is performing among the top 25% of all US hospitals for the specific procedure.
- ✓ A Yellow Check indicates that the hospital falls in the middle 50% of all hospitals.
- ✓- A Red Check-Minus indicates that the hospital is among the lowest performing 25% of all US hospitals.

What other information is available regarding the facility?

Within the facility detail page, we provide quality details, quality definition, and a list of practicing physicians with demographic information:

The screenshot shows the facility detail page for Woods Endoscopy Center. The facility name is "Woods Endoscopy Center" located at "9765 East 116th Street, Fishers, IN 46308" with a distance of "-1.4 miles". A call-to-action button says "Call now to book an appointment" with the phone number "(317) 000-0000". Below this, there are four metrics: "Cost" (Slightly Above Fair Price) with a yellow triangle icon, "Quality" (Highest Quality) with a green check-plus icon, "Patient Ratings" with a "healthgrades" logo, and "Map It" with a map icon. At the bottom, there are tabs for "Physicians", "Quality Details", and "Quality Definitions".

Will every hospital have a quality rating for every procedure?

No - not every hospital performs every procedure.

Bluebook's quality information is a better source for the following reasons:

- Quality ratings are provided at the clinical category
- Data is not self-reported
- Data is statistically relevant and risk adjusted
- Includes all non-federal hospitals
- Bluebook's rating is multi-dimensional and includes five areas: Patient Complications, Patient Safety, Mortality, Core Process Metrics and Patient Satisfaction
- Ratings are displayed in an easy color coded format

Does Healthcare Bluebook include cost rating information along with quality ratings?

Yes. Bluebook's solution currently includes cost ratings for a growing number of inpatient procedures that have quality ratings.