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Michigan Health and Safety Coalition Announces New Consumer Web Site

DETROIT -- Consumers can now go on-line to get important information about Michigan hospitals when planning treatment for seven serious medical conditions and for care provided in intensive care units. Michigan hospitals voluntarily worked with the coalition to create this valuable resource. Hospital-specific data for participating hospitals is available on the Michigan Health and Safety Coalition Web site at www.mihealthandsafety.org. Links to questions patients should consider when selecting health care providers or making decisions about treatment options are also available on the site.

To reach the consumer information, go to www.mihealthandsafety.org, then click on Hospital Survey. At the bottom of that page, you'll see Consumer Survey Reports — click on that. You'll see several links under Consumer Survey Reports on the left side of the screen, including Participating Michigan Hospitals, Accessing Hospital Activities, Survey Results by Guideline and Survey Results by Hospital.

Formed in 2000, the Michigan Health and Safety Coalition includes representatives of Michigan hospitals, health professionals, businesses, unions and health plans. The mission of the coalition is to help improve health care quality across all care settings.

To set the clinical framework for the consumer information, the coalition convened panels of expert physicians and nurses to review medical literature and to develop guidelines based on scientific evidence and expert consensus. The initial guidelines are in areas where scientific study suggests a relationship between hospital characteristics and patient outcomes, and where employer and consumer interest in hospital-specific information appears to be high.

This year Michigan hospitals in urban, suburban and rural areas voluntarily completed an extensive survey based on the guidelines, providing information for the following treatment areas:

- Abdominal aortic aneurysm repair
- Removal of plaque from the carotid artery (carotid endarterectomy surgery)
- Removal of part of the esophagus due to cancer (esophagectomy for cancer)
- Care of infants with certain birth defects (congenital anomalies) in neonatal intensive care units
- Intensive care unit physician staffing
- Care for low birth-weight infants in neonatal intensive care units

- Open-heart surgery (including coronary artery bypass surgery)
- Heart procedures or treatments that are performed using a catheter inserted through the skin, including angioplasty (percutaneous coronary interventions)

In 2001, 98 percent of Michigan patients who needed one or more of these procedures had them performed at hospitals that participated in the survey. All hospitals don't perform every one of the surveyed procedures. In fact, some hospitals don't provide any of these particular procedures. However, all hospitals were supportive of the effort and agreed to work with the coalition to expand the scope of the survey to include additional areas of study in the future.

"Hospitals develop areas of expertise, and the coalition believes it's important that people understand that and be able to make informed choices. The information on our Web site doesn't tell the whole story about hospital care, but it does include indicators -- the number of cases each hospital treated and each hospital's performance measured against the guidelines -- that suggest better outcomes for patients," said Marianne Udow, chair of the coalition and senior vice president of Health Care Products and Provider Services for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan.

The coalition plans to use the collected data to implement further health and safety activities related to the seven areas of treatment and Intensive Care Unit services. Other coalition activities include piloting hand-held prescribing devices in physicians' offices, a task force looking at relationships between nurse staffing and patient safety, and leadership education on creating a culture of safety in health care.

The Hospital Referral Guidelines, consumers' reports and more information about the Michigan Health and Safety Coalition can be found on the coalition's Web site at www.mihealthandsafety.org.

Michigan Health and Safety Coalition members include:

- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
- DaimlerChrysler Corporation
- Ford Motor Company
- General Motors Corporation
- International Union, UAW
- Michigan Association of Health Plans
- Michigan Department of Community Health
- Michigan Education Special Services Association
- Michigan Health & Hospital Association
- Michigan Nurses Association
- Michigan Osteopathic Association
- Michigan Peer Review Organization
- Michigan Pharmacists Association
- Michigan State Medical Society

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Coalition members comment on the Hospital Referral Guidelines and the on-line consumer report

Michigan Association of Health plans

The Michigan Association of Health Plans represents 25 Michigan HMOs.

"We're charged with providing our health plan members with quality health care. We do a lot of credentialing and checks on the quality of our providers. We're interested in knowing that our providers are doing the appropriate job. We're committed to the health and safety of our members and helping them get well. We do believe the public should get information. We believe individuals should take an interest in their health care and help to manage it. We want individuals to have the information so they can be involved in decisions."

Eugene Farnum, executive director:

Michigan State Medical Society

The Michigan State Medical Society is a professional organization, representing 14,000 doctors in all specialties.

"The expert panels of physicians brought a clinical and patient perspective to developing the guidelines. They advocated for patients in terms of their needs and use of these services. We expect patients will use the information as a reference as they move through the health care system."

Kevin Kelly, managing director

"The willingness of the participating hospitals to share information publicly regarding their ability to handle these complex areas of medical care is an important step toward continuously improving the quality of medical care we receive in the state of Michigan. More than numbers of procedures performed, the hospitals were willing to report on their progress toward systems of care. These systems will not only maintain or improve the high level of quality they already provide, but will have expanding effects on the care provided in other yet-to-be defined services. This information is unique to many other previous reporting initiatives."

Greg Forzley, MD, MSMS representative to the Michigan Health and Safety Coalition

Michigan Health & Hospital Association

The Michigan Health & Hospital Association is a statewide association dedicated to improving the health of Michigan residents through collaborative efforts with health care providers, community agencies and citizens.

"The impressive participation rate of Michigan's nonprofit community hospitals sets a national example of what voluntary and collaborative endeavors yield. Quality and patient safety are core elements as we remain accountable to our community."

Spencer Johnson, president

Michigan Nurses Association

The Michigan Nurses Association is the largest professional association and union for registered nurses in the state of Michigan.

"Nurses collaborated in the development of best practices safety guidelines to provide on-line status reports of Michigan hospitals. Physicians and nurses considered not only current best practices but also access to care concerns for Michigan residents. The coalition has strived to present the information in a format that will be helpful and informative to consumers."

Marge Freundl, MSN, RN, MNA representative to the MHSC



What we are

Formed in 2000, the Michigan Health and Safety Coalition is a voluntary, collaborative quality improvement effort focused on improving patient safety in Michigan.

Who we are

The coalition membership is diverse, representing key health care stakeholders in Michigan. Our members are:

- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
- DaimlerChrysler Corporation
- Ford Motor Company
- General Motors Corporation
- International Union, UAW
- Michigan Association of Health Plans
- Michigan Department of Community Health
- Michigan Education Special Services Association
- Michigan Health & Hospital Association
- Michigan Nurses Association
- Michigan Osteopathic Association
- Michigan Peer Review Organization
- Michigan Pharmacists Association
- Michigan State Medical Society

Our mission statement

The Michigan Health and Safety Coalition will help improve health care quality in Michigan through cost-effective improvements in patient safety, including medical errors, across all health care settings.

Our goals are to:

- Provide leadership and share knowledge on patient safety issues in Michigan
- Develop and/or support systemic approaches to identifying and learning from errors with a focus on continuous improvement.
- Encourage the establishment of performance standards for patient safety, medical error reporting and continuous improvement; and encourage the provision of positive incentives for improved performance.
- Support a culture of safety by encouraging the implementation of safety systems in health care organizations.

Our projects

Recent and ongoing projects include:

- Development of Hospital Referral Guidelines and consumer report
- Pilot of hand-held prescribing devices for physicians to use in their offices
- A taskforce studying the relationship between nurse staffing levels and patient safety
- Annual conferences for health care leaders to foster a culture of patient safety in Michigan.

Contacting us

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