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Nationwide hospital collaborative saves more than 8,000 lives and \$577 million in costs in one year

Premier healthcare alliance QUEST initiative serving as a test bed for critical healthcare reforms, shows higher quality care can lead to lower costs

Washington, DC (October 21, 2009) – As policymakers struggle to find practical solutions that improve healthcare quality and control spending, [hospitals participating](#) in the Premier healthcare alliance's [QUEST: High Performing Hospitals](#) national collaborative have saved an estimated total of 8,043 lives and \$577 million in one year. Of the approximately 2.3 million patients treated annually in [these hospitals](#), 24,818 additional patients received treatments that met the highest quality patient care standards when compared to baseline performance at the outset of the project.

According to a Premier analysis of these Year 1 results, if non-participating hospitals were able to achieve the improvements found among the [QUEST participants](#), they could save an estimated additional 52,760 lives.

"These remarkable results highlight what can be achieved when hospitals assume the leadership needed to set high goals, focus on continuous improvement and commit to action that yields positive outcomes for patients," said Susan DeVore, Premier president and CEO. "Imagine if the remaining 97 percent of U.S. hospitals not participating in QUEST could replicate these results – cost reductions and quality improvements would be significant.

"QUEST hospitals are outpacing the performance of others, proving that when hospitals work together in a transparent, collaborative forum, they bring the depth of their shared knowledge to the table," DeVore continued. "Such collaboration helps participants reliably deliver the most efficient, effective and caring hospital experience for each and every patient, every single time."

QUEST is a voluntary, three-year project made up of 157 participants across 31 states, including urban/rural, large/small and teaching/non-teaching facilities. Developed in partnership with Premier and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), QUEST is designed to springboard hospitals to new levels of performance and inform public policies with meaningful solutions, supported by real results. To accomplish this, QUEST benchmarked participating facilities using data from Premier's clinical database to determine the "baseline" level of performance in cost, mortality and evidence-based care delivery. [Hospitals](#) were then challenged to overcome the main factors that lead to deaths, errors and excessive costs, and measure themselves against one another to achieve top performance based on the following goals:

- **Save lives:** Eliminate avoidable hospital mortalities;
- **Safely reduce the cost of care:** Reduce the costs for each patient's hospitalization;
- **Deliver the most reliable and effective care:** Ensure that patients receive every recommended

evidence-based care measure.

Since setting these three-year goals at the baseline, QUEST hospitals in the first year reduced the cost of care by an average of \$343 per patient and increased the delivery of every recommended patient care measure by 8.74 percentage points to deliver every recommended evidence-based care measure an average of 86.3 percent of the time. At the same time, QUEST hospitals achieved a 14 percent reduction in observed mortality when compared to what was expected.

"Improving mortality has been a strategic initiative at Memorial Health University Medical Center for many years, so we were excited to participate in QUEST," said Dr. Marty Scott, MD, MBA, vice president, Quality and Patient Safety, Institute for Clinical Effectiveness, Memorial Health University Medical Center. "This project gives us an opportunity to benchmark our mortality data against other organizations, to see how we compare. We've been able to learn from other organizations' best practices and in turn, have been able to share some of our experience and successes. We are always pursuing excellence in clinical care, and QUEST is a natural extension of that pursuit."

"SSM Health Care-St. Louis is working very hard to provide safe, high quality and cost-effective patient care," said Dr. Kevin Johnson, network vice president and chief medical officer for SSM Health Care-St. Louis. "Teamwork, collaboration and implementing best practices are essential to achieving these goals."

Although many hospitals in QUEST have achieved significant improvements in one year, the sad reality is that perverse incentives in the current fee-for-service payment model work to encourage increased costs and inefficiency, the very areas that QUEST is committed to improving. Steps being taken now in healthcare reform, including quality measures development and the national expansion of value-based purchasing (VBP) represent good first attempts to address these concerns, but there remains a need to continue to build these programs out to incent top performance and share savings from quality improvements with hospitals.

Moving forward for years two and three of the program, additional performance metrics will be added to QUEST, including:

- **Improve patient safety:** Prevent incidents of harm in more than 30 categories, including healthcare-acquired infections and birth injuries
- **Increase satisfaction:** Improve the patient's overall care experience and loyalty to the care providing facility

Premier recently [expanded participation](#) in the QUEST project, adding more than 30 hospitals, and will offer additional opportunities to enroll in the future. All participants will be held to the same performance improvement targets as the original members. The second wave of hospital participants will work alongside the original group, who will serve as mentors, sharing best practices they have learned through QUEST to systematically initiate efforts proven to dramatically improve quality and patient outcomes.

32 top-performing hospitals ([click here](#) to view success stories from the top 32 performers)

32 QUEST hospitals have attained the performance goals in all three areas measured in Year 1: cost, quality and evidence-based care delivery. These top-performing hospitals are:

- Alegent Health
 - Mercy Hospital – Council Bluffs, Iowa
- Alexian Brothers Health System
 - St. Alexius Medical Center – Hoffman Estates, Ill.
- Aurora Health Care
 - Aurora Medical Center in Kenosha, Wis.

- Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh, Wis.
- Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center – Sheboygan, Wis.
- Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center – Milwaukee
- St. Luke's South Shore – Cudahy, Wis.
- Bon Secours Health System
 - Bon Secours St. Francis Health System – Greenville, S.C.
 - St. Francis eastside
 - St. Francis downtown
 - Bon Secours Richmond Health System
 - Memorial Regional Medical Center – Mechanicsville, Va.
- Charleston Area Medical Center Health System – Charleston, W.Va.
 - Charleston Area Medical Center
 - CAMC General Hospital
 - CAMC Memorial Hospital
 - Women and Children's Hospital
- CaroMont Health
 - Gaston Memorial Hospital – Gastonia, N.C.
- Greenville Hospital System
 - Hillcrest Memorial Hospital – Simpsonville, S.C.
- Kettering Health Network
 - Kettering Medical Center – Kettering, Ohio
 - Sycamore Medical Center – Miamisburg, Ohio
 - Grandview Medical Center – Dayton, Ohio
 - Southview Medical Center – Dayton, Ohio
- LaGrange/Troup County Hospital Authority – La Grange, Ga.
- Memorial Health University Medical Center – Savannah, Ga.
- Meridian Health
 - Jersey Shore University Medical Center – Neptune, N.J.
- Mountain States Health Alliance
 - Indian Path Medical Center – Kingsport, Tenn.
 - North Side Hospital – Johnson City, Tenn.
- Pallottine Missionary Sisters
 - St. Mary's Medical Center – Huntington, W.Va.
- St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network
 - St. Luke's Quakertown Hospital – Quakertown, Pa.
- SSM Health Care
 - SSM DePaul Health Center – Bridgeton, Mo.
 - SSM St. Mary's Hospital – Richmond Heights, Mo.
 - SSM St. Joseph Health Center – St. Charles, Mo.
- Texas Health Resources
 - Texas Health Harris Methodist Hurst-Euless-Bedford – Bedford, Texas
 - Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Azle – Azle, Texas
 - Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Cleburne – Cleburne, Texas
 - Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Kaufman – Kaufman, Texas
- TriHealth - Cincinnati
 - Bethesda North Hospital
 - Good Samaritan Hospital

About Premier Inc., 2006 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award recipient

The [Premier healthcare alliance](#) is more than 2,200 U.S. hospitals and 63,000-plus other healthcare sites working together to improve healthcare quality and affordability. Owned by not-for-profit hospitals, Premier maintains the nation's most comprehensive repository of clinical, financial and outcomes information and operates a leading healthcare purchasing network. A world leader in helping deliver measurable improvements in care, Premier works with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the United Kingdom's National Health Service North West to improve hospital performance. Headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., Premier also has offices in San Diego, Philadelphia and Washington. Follow Premier on [Twitter](#).

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