



Sutter Health
With You. For Life.

March 6, 2007

Across our Sutter Health network, we want every single patient experience – whether it takes place in one of our hospitals, a physician’s office, over the telephone or in the patient’s home – to be the absolute best. As part of this steadfast commitment, we routinely participate in quality studies so our hospitals can identify opportunities to improve care, increase safety and provide better outcomes for patients in our communities.

Sutter Health supports the CHART initiative for public reporting of quality data to provide consumers and purchasers with valid information about quality in California hospitals. In fact, our organization has participated on the CHART Steering Committee since its inception in 2004.

CHART data here at CalHospitalCompare.org provides value and directional guidance regarding some quality outcomes as well as patient-experience data like “satisfaction with care.” Although the data presented by CHART is not representative of all care or all services, it is a good starting point.

Health care consumers should know that solid statistical methodology – which shows true, valid distinctions across facilities – has demonstrated that most hospitals are providing average care with very few hospitals statistically better or worse than average. These accepted statistical models did not provide enough distinction to meet consumers’ demands for “choice.” Therefore, CHART developed a hybrid methodology to create the five-tiered scoring system. As a result, non-statistically valid comparisons were generated for this report.

Hospital categories of performance using this five-point scale are the best compromise by the CHART Steering Committee to meet the demands of multiple stakeholders. However, they may lead to inappropriate labeling of hospitals and distinctions that are not statistically valid.

Data reported by all hospitals in this first release of the CHART report (March 6, 2007) is approximately a year old. Although this is now old data, it is the best compromise for the initial report. We look forward to future reports that will improve in methodology and timeliness. In the meantime, patients and their families who want more up-to-date data on Sutter Health hospitals may visit sutterhealth.org for our quality reports, which have been updated regularly since early 2006.

At Sutter Health, we’re partnering with patients so they have the information they need to make better health care decisions. It’s one reason why we say, “With You. For Life.”

Sincerely,

Patrick E. Fry
President and CEO,
Sutter Health

Contact: quality@sutterhealth.org
2200 River Plaza Drive
Sacramento, CA 95833