

Keeping patients happy

National satisfaction survey shows room for improvement in Virginia

Carilion Giles Community Hospital tied with Virginia Hospital Center for the highest percentage of patients awarding top scores for patient care.



by Robert Powell

A majority of patients at Virginia hospitals are pleased with the care they receive, but many health-care institutions in the commonwealth still scored lower than the U.S. average in a national satisfaction survey available from Virginia Health Information.

The most recent survey of the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems showed 68 percent of patients responding nationally gave hospitals a top rating (a 9 or 10 on a range of 1 to 10) for their patient care in 2010.

In Virginia, 37 percent of acute-care hospitals involved in the survey (28 of 76) got top scores of 68 percent or more from patients taking the survey. Fifty percent of the hospitals (38 of 76) matched or exceeded the state average of 65 percent.

In another part of the survey, patients were asked whether they would “definitely” recommend a hospital to friends and family. Nationally, an average of 70 percent of patients gave their hospital full endorsements while 67 percent was the average in Virginia. Thirty-eight percent of Virginia hospitals (29 of 76) scored 70 percent or better while 54 percent (41 of

76) met the state average.

This marks the second year that Virginia Health Information has made state information from the survey available to the public. Virginia Business has worked with VHI since 2004 in tracking information on a variety of medical services at hospitals in the commonwealth.

Looking at the scores of individual hospitals in the satisfaction survey, Carilion Giles Community Hospital in Pearisburg and Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington both had 76 percent of patients awarding the institutions a 9 or 10 on patient care, the highest percentage in the state.

One percentage point behind them was Centra Health in Lynchburg and Bon Secours St. Francis Medical Center in Midlothian at 75 percent.

In patient recommendations, Martha Jefferson Hospital was the leader with 83 percent of respondents endorsing the hospital. Virginia Hospital Center and Centra Health followed at 81 percent.

The following pages detail patient response to the survey conducted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Specialty hospitals and children’s

hospitals were not included in the survey, which gauged only the care of adults.

Also, included in this report are charts outlining patient volume in 10 service lines, or types of procedures, at hospitals in five regions throughout the state. The charts break down the number of patients discharged at each hospital for a particular treatment. The charts also show what that number represents as a percentage of the region’s total patient volume for that service.

For example, Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church accounted for more than 57 percent of patient discharges in invasive cardiology in the northern region in 2010. In another service line, gynecological surgery, the percentages of the top three hospitals in patient discharges — CJW Medical Center, Bon Secours St. Mary’s Hospital and VCU Health System, all based in Richmond — are less than 1.5 points apart.

A full list of charts of other service lines is available at www.VirginiaBusiness.com. Addition information on hospitals, physicians, health insurance and nursing facilities are available at Virginia Health Information’s website, www.vhi.org. **VB**