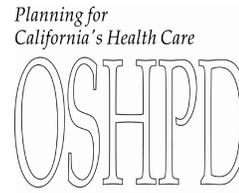




PBGH
Pacific Business
Group on Health



OFFICE OF STATEWIDE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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PUBLIC REPORTING OF HEART BYPASS SURGERY MORTALITY RATES HELPS CONSUMERS MAKE HEALTH CARE DECISIONS

SAN FRANCISCO – Consumers will now have more information to support critical health care decisions, thanks to a new report issued by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) that reports mortality rates and health care quality ratings for 77 participating hospitals in 2000-2002. The overall in-hospital death rate of 2.61 percent among participating hospitals compares to a death rate of 3.35 percent among hospitals not participating in the study during the same three-year period.

Of the 77 hospitals that voluntarily reported, 60 performed “as expected,” 8 performed “better than expected,” and 9 performed “worse than expected” after adjusting for the clinical severity of their patients. The report’s risk adjustment model allows for fair comparison across different hospitals and assures that hospitals are not punished for taking on more serious cases.

The Pacific Business Group on Health (PBGH), a major coalition of health care purchasers, and OSHPD collaborated on the study, along with hospitals. The previous success of this voluntary effort helped catalyze the passage of Senate Bill 680 (2001), which now mandates that all hospitals have their heart bypass surgery performance reported. Taking quality accountability one step further, SB 680 calls for the measurement and public reporting of surgeon-specific mortality rates beginning in 2006.

“This report confirms that the variation in care among hospitals truly can be a matter of life and death,” said Peter V. Lee, president and CEO of PBGH. “Performance transparency is an essential first step toward improving health care quality.”

“I am proud of the work accomplished by this collaborative,” said Dr. David Carlisle, director of OSHPD, which is responsible for continuing the collection and release of all hospital and physician bypass surgery performance to the public. “I am particularly appreciative of the 77 hospitals that demonstrated their commitment to continuously improve patient outcomes by participating in this voluntary program. Due to this effort, consumers will have the information necessary to make an informed selection of a hospital for bypass surgery, and hospitals are being provided comparative information that encourages quality improvement.”

The 2000-2002 report tracks 73 percent of coronary artery bypass surgeries performed in California's hospitals and confirms findings from previous reports - volunteer hospitals are the better performing hospitals and hospitals with a higher volume of surgeries (greater than 200 per year) tend to have better outcomes. The results indicate that although not all low volume hospitals have poor performance, there is a clear relationship between high volume and lower mortality.

Copies of the report can be downloaded from the PBGH (www.pbgh.org) and OSHPD (www.oshpd.ca.gov) Websites.

OSHPD is a state agency that plans for and supports the development of a health care delivery system that meets the current and future needs of Californians. OSHPD conducts studies on access, cost and quality and is responsible for reporting risk-adjusted hospital outcomes data.

PBGH is dedicated to improving health care quality while moderating cost. Members annually spend billions of dollars to provide health coverage to approximately three million employees, retirees and their families. PBGH also operates PacAdvantage, a small-group purchasing pool providing health insurance to 10,000 small employers in California.

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