

Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc.

## NEWS



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# Wisconsin Health Care Best in the Nation

*Wisconsin ranks #1 among all states based on quality*

*For the second time in a month, Wisconsin health care receives top honors*

**MADISON, WI (August 22, 2017)** ---- Wisconsin is the top state in the nation for health care with the highest overall health care quality score among all 50 states, according to the federal [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](#) (AHRQ). The ranking is based on Wisconsin's performance across more than 130 statistical measures that AHRQ uses to evaluate health care performance.

Wisconsin is first in the nation, followed closely by Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. The [top ten](#) performing states are all located in either the Northeast or Midwest. Wisconsin ranked third highest in the nation last year and has only been out of the top three twice in the past decade.

"The AHRQ rankings are a national validation of what we know here; Wisconsin's local and regional health systems are delivering some of the best care in the country," according to [Wisconsin Hospital Association](#) President/CEO Eric Borgerding. "Across all care settings, in rural and urban communities, we are maintaining consistently high performance, while striving to set even higher standards of care. It is that combination of performance and commitment to be better that makes Wisconsin a perennial leader."

The AHRQ top ranking is based on the overall quality of care in the state. It arrives on the heels of Wisconsin's Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) being singled out in July 2017 as the [best in the nation](#) by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for outstanding quality performance. That ranking was based on participation in and achievement on the Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Project (MBQIP). Wisconsin CAHS achieved the highest reporting rates and levels of improvement in the country over the past year. CAHs are hospitals with fewer than 25 beds that provide essential services in rural areas. There are 58 CAHs in Wisconsin.

"We know as we improve quality, we reduce health care costs and patient outcomes are better," Borgerding said. "That helps ensure that Wisconsin will continue to be known for high-quality, high-value care, which is an economic development asset in every part of the state."

Wisconsin has shown consistently high performance since AHRQ started the state rankings in 2006. This year, the state's strongest performance was in acute and chronic care, and patient safety. The best scores in Wisconsin based on the setting where the care was provided were in the hospital, medical clinic and by home health and hospice providers.

The quality of health care varies widely across the nation, according to AHRQ. That is why, according to Kelly Court, WHA chief quality officer, Wisconsin’s performance is impressive because health care providers here are focused on delivering high quality care across all settings.

“The consistency from year to year is important,” says Court. “This demonstrates that health care is coordinated across settings and delivered as an entire system statewide. It also demonstrates that Wisconsin providers continue to evolve as health care changes, but they never lose their focus on improving important aspects of patient care.”

The AHRQ quality measures are compared to achievable benchmarks, which are derived from the top-performing states. AHRQ measures health care quality in three different contexts: by types of care (such as preventive, acute, or chronic care), by settings of care (such as hospitals, nursing homes, home health or hospice), and care by clinical area (such as care for patients with cancer or respiratory diseases). They also report measures by race and ethnicity.

While Wisconsin shows strong overall performance in most areas of care, there is still work to be done related to health care equity, including care for both high and low income populations and ethnic minorities. When measures are segmented by race and ethnicity, the performance is just average.

“WHA members are aligning their quality improvement goals to address health care equity issues as they work with community partners to develop programs and policies that will have a positive impact on population health,” Court said.

*The Wisconsin Hospital Association represents hospitals and health systems statewide that provide both inpatient care and outpatient services in a variety of settings.*

Access the full AHRQ report here: <https://nhqrnet.ahrq.gov/inhqrdr/state/select>

#### AHRQ Rankings 2006 – 2017

<b>Year</b>	<b>WI Ranking</b>
<b>2006</b>	1
<b>2007</b>	2
<b>2008</b>	1
<b>2009</b>	2
<b>2010</b>	7
<b>2011</b>	2
<b>2012</b>	No Report
<b>2013</b>	4
<b>2014</b>	3
<b>2015</b>	2
<b>2016</b>	3
<b>2017</b>	1

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