

# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**For more information, contact:**

Jennifer Trotter, Communications Manager  
(505) 998-9898

## **Second Quarter Reporting of Hospital Quality Reveals that New Mexico Is Improving But Has Room for Continued Work**

Albuquerque, NM – The New Mexico Medical Review Association (NMMRA) announced today that data released from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) indicate that New Mexico hospitals are at or exceeding national levels related to the quality of care they provide in some areas being measured, yet lag behind compared to most national rates.

A comparison of New Mexico to the United States for second quarter of 2007 quality data submitted by hospitals to CMS shows that the state is at or above the national average on some indicators. New Mexico is in line with national percentages on measures related to aspirin and beta-blockers prescribed at discharge for acute myocardial infarction (AMI) patients and appropriate selection of prophylactic antibiotics for surgical patients. New Mexico is above the national average for:

- Glucose controls for cardiac surgery patients (91 percent of patients receive this treatment in New Mexico compared to 85 percent nationally)
- Postoperative normothermia control for colorectal patients (85 percent compared to 81 percent)
- Appropriate method of hair removal from the surgical site (98 percent compared to 94 percent)

However, opportunities for improvement exist in inpatient heart failure management, where New Mexico trails the nation significantly in all four of the quality measures:

- Patients who receive discharge instructions (55 percent in New Mexico compared to 75 percent nationally)
- Patients who receive an order for or evaluation of left ventricular systolic (LVS) function (86 percent compared to 94 percent)
- Patients who receive orders for angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors or angiotensin receptor blockers for patients with LVS dysfunction (88 percent compared to 90 percent)
- Patients who smoke who receive smoking cessation advice (86 percent compared to 95 percent)

Other areas needing improvement in the state are timeliness for the administration of pre-surgical antibiotics (82 percent in New Mexico compared to 88 percent nationally) and the timely post-surgical discontinuation of antibiotics (81 percent compared to 83 percent).

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## New Mexico Medical Review Association



AMI patients in New Mexico receive a beta-blocker at arrival to the hospital 90 percent of the time, compared to 94 percent of the time nationally. Inpatient pneumonia care also lags significantly in several areas, including:

- Pneumococcal vaccinations (70 percent in New Mexico compared to 82 percent nationally)
- Performing blood cultures prior to administering initial antibiotics (85 percent compared to 91 percent)
- Smoking cessation advice (86 percent compared to 92 percent)
- Selection of appropriate antibiotics (85 percent compared to 89 percent)

“Hospitals in this state work diligently to improve their quality of care,” said Carlene Brown, MPH, CPHQ, NMMRA quality improvement manager, “The national standard continues to improve so work remains to be done to keep New Mexico on par with national, publicly reported quality-of-care rates. It is important to note that this data provides only a slice of information about hospital care and does not define hospital quality in its entirety.”

NMMRA is under contract with CMS to help hospitals identify gaps in care-delivery systems and explore opportunities for creating more efficient, effective care. Hospitals work with NMMRA on several national projects aimed at improving the quality and safety of inpatient care and to report their rates for nationally approved quality measures. These measures help providers, payers and patients to evaluate the quality of care given in New Mexico’s hospitals.

Consumer-friendly quality rates can be found for individual New Mexico hospitals on CMS’ national public Web site Hospital Compare ([www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/](http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/)) and on a Web site sponsored by the New Mexico Hospital Association called NMCheckPoint ([www.nmcheckpoint.org/](http://www.nmcheckpoint.org/)).

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### About NMMRA

NMMRA is an Albuquerque-based, non-profit, physician-sponsored organization. Serving as a resource to the state's health care community and to Medicare beneficiaries, NMMRA seeks to fulfill its mission to facilitate demonstrable and continuous improvement in the quality of health care and achieve its vision to be a premier and innovative leader in improving health care. NMMRA has served continuously as the state's only federally contracted Medicare QIO since 1984. NMMRA also serves as the state's Medicaid External Quality Review Organization.

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