Leading the Nation in Quality

Advancing the health of the people we serve by leading the nation in quality and patient safety.
These efforts have paid off in national, regional and state recognition, making us the clear LEADER IN HOUSTON IN QUALITY AND PATIENT SAFETY.

RECENT NATIONAL RECOGNITIONS

Eisenberg Patient Safety Award
Memorial Hermann was the first health system in Texas to earn the John. M. Eisenberg Award for Patient Safety and Quality in 2012. Presented by the National Quality Forum (NQF) and The Joint Commission, the nation’s guardians of health and safety, the award recognizes national leaders in delivering safe, effective healthcare with a patient-centered focus.

Truven Health Top 5 Large Health Systems
For the second consecutive year, we were named one of the Top 5 Large Health Systems in the nation in the 15 Top Health Systems study by Truven Health, formerly Thomson Reuters. Memorial Hermann was the only hospital system in Texas named among the nation’s top 15 health systems based on clinical outcomes, patient safety, patient satisfaction and operational efficiency.

NQF National Quality Healthcare Award
Each year, one hospital or system is recognized by the National Quality Forum as a role model for the achievement of meaningful, sustainable quality improvement through performance measurement. Memorial Hermann received the 2009 award.

National Health System Patient Safety Leadership Award
A collaborative effort between the VHA Foundation and the National Business Group on Health, this award recognizes health systems that place the highest value on patient safety. Memorial Hermann received the award in 2008.

America’s 50 Best Hospitals by Healthgrades®
Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital, Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital, Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital and Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Hospital were listed among America’s 50 Best Hospitals by Healthgrades. For four consecutive years, the distinction places these Memorial Hermann hospitals among the top 1 percent in the United States for overall clinical excellence.

Best Hospitals by U.S.News & World Report
TIRR Memorial Hermann was ranked among the top three rehabilitation hospitals in the 2013 U.S.News & World Report survey. The 2013 rankings mark the 24th consecutive year that TIRR Memorial Hermann has stood among the top five rehabilitation hospitals in the country.

American Hospital Association-McKesson Quest for Quality Prize Finalist
Memorial Hermann was a 2010 finalist for this award, which honors hospitals that are committed in a systematic manner to achieving the Institute of Medicine’s six quality aims: safety, patient-centeredness, effectiveness, efficiency, timeliness and equity.

Franklin Award of Distinction
Memorial Hermann Care Management received the 2011 Franklin Award of Distinction recognizing its standardized approach to systemwide care management, granted by The Joint Commission and the American Care Management Association.
In collaboration with our affiliated, clinically integrated physicians, we have built a system of care that ensures timely, accurate, safe and effective treatments.

HIGH-RELIABILITY HEALTHCARE.

Most people consider hospitals safe havens where they go to get well, not places where they could suffer a harmful event resulting in greater illness or even death. They expect hospitals to be high-reliability organizations (HROs), where zero error is the norm. The reality, however, is far different.

According to a 2010 report by the U.S. Office of the Inspector General, one in seven Medicare beneficiaries – representing 13.5 percent – suffers a preventable serious adverse event during a hospital stay. We believe that hospitals can and should aspire to be HROs, and we’ve taken the necessary steps to achieve that status at Memorial Hermann Health System.

By 2010, the results of our quality and patient safety initiatives became encouragingly apparent, and we continue to raise the bar. When blood transfusions for the January 2007 to June 2013 time period were tallied for a population of 1.6 million adjusted inpatients and 8.5 million days of care, more than 827,000 transfusions had been administered with zero cases of blood incompatibility. Several of our hospitals have gone years without a case of ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP) or a central line-associated bloodstream infection (CLABSI). In addition, serious medication errors decreased to zero for most months, even though more than a million medications were administered per month.

Our successful efforts have led to numerous awards and recognitions by independent healthcare rating agencies, culminating in the 2012 Eisenberg Patient Safety Award. Presented by the National Quality Forum (NQF) and The Joint Commission, the award recognizes us as a national leader in delivering safe, effective healthcare with a patient-centered focus. Memorial Hermann was the first health system in Texas to earn this distinction.

When we embarked on our journey to become a high-reliability organization, we didn’t do it to win awards. We did it in the best interests of our patients and their families. While we are encouraged by our achievements, we also recognize that becoming an HRO is a never-ending quest toward the achievable goal of zero harm to patients under our care.

In collaboration with our affiliated, clinically integrated physicians, we have built a system of care that ensures timely, accurate, safe and effective treatments. These efforts have paid off in national, regional and state recognition, making us the clear leader in Houston in quality and patient safety.

We salute our employees and affiliated physicians who have made this achievement possible through their attention to high-reliability behaviors, evidence-based care and harm prevention.

Sincerely,

Dan Wolterman
President and CEO
Memorial Hermann Health System

M. Michael Shabot, M.D.
System Chief Medical Officer
Memorial Hermann Health System
It’s one thing to say **YOU’RE THE BEST.**
Some awards are based on reputation. Others are based on clinical outcomes readily available from public data sources, including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services through Hospital Compare, a consumer-oriented website that provides information on how well hospitals deliver recommended care to their patients. We believe that recognition that rests on measures of an organization’s overall performance – patient outcomes and satisfaction, operational efficiency, physician performance, patient safety and financial stability – is the true validation of quality.

Leaders at Memorial Hermann have created a culture of safety that begins at the executive level and extends throughout the organization. In 2006, we implemented a high-reliability organization (HRO) program called “Breakthroughs in Patient Safety,” bringing in engineers and other experts from nuclear power, commercial aviation, naval aviation and other HROs to train our employees to perform tasks in a safe, highly reliable manner.

The result is safer, more coordinated care that leads to better clinical outcomes and reduces costs for employers, consumers and society. Our clinically integrated physician network delivers the best value for our patients, who also benefit from our longstanding affiliation with the UTHealth Medical School, whose world-class specialists bring leading-edge research from the lab to the bedside.
When we embarked on our HRO journey, our goals were 100 percent compliance with evidence-based quality measures and a 0 percent incidence of patient harm – a major opportunity for a system the size of Memorial Hermann. We operate nine acute care hospitals, two rehabilitation hospitals, 19 ambulatory surgical centers and more than 100 other ambulatory facilities, and count 21,500 employees and 5,000 affiliated physicians who provide 732,000 days of inpatient care for 135,000 patients annually.

EMPOWERED TO EXCEL

A Relentless Focus on Quality and Patient Safety
From the Boardroom to the Bedside
A disciplined approach and an aligned organizational structure have ensured the success of our performance improvement efforts. Our outcomes focus is determined annually by the Memorial Hermann Health System board and senior leadership, and defined in our system strategies, each of which is tied to our vision and mission and backed by specific goals and measures. Outcomes are tied to goals, and performance improvement is developed and executed as close to the bedside as possible.

Transparent Reporting and Continuous Self-Assessment
Results are reported up through Monthly Operating Review (MOR) meetings, giving leadership the opportunity to aid in process streamlining and execution. Our system chief medical officer, system chief operating officer and other senior system executives and facility leaders form action plans for every variance across our entire health system. Each of our facilities organizes performance measures into a dashboard showing results against target goals, and action plans are developed for performance that does not meet goals. Our board reviews quality and patient safety results quarterly through the System Quality Committee, giving top leadership ownership for quality, patient safety and clinical care alongside those who work at the bedside.

MEMORIAL HERMANN HEALTH SYSTEM
Performance Improvement, Quality and Safety Communication and Reporting Structure

OUR QUALITY AND SAFETY STRATEGY STATEMENT
“To lead healthcare to superior patient outcomes through creation of a high-reliability culture with evidence-based quality and patient safety as our core value.” Our strategic plan comprises three domains with specific measures:
• Clinical Excellence
• Do No Harm
• Saving Lives

Physician Support and Leadership
MHMD, the Memorial Hermann Physician Network, is leading the transformation of medical practice in collaboration with patients, payors and caregivers through the use of evidence-based medicine. The 3,600-member physician group has established a culture of physician accountability, and creates and deploys new models of healthcare that are improving the quality, safety and cost efficiency of the care we provide. MHMD’s Clinical Programs Committee is the primary source of evidence-based practices, inpatient and outpatient quality metrics, pharmacy and supply vendor decisions for Memorial Hermann. The development of task-oriented Joint Operating Councils has led to a number of major patient safety and quality initiatives, including efforts to reduce or eliminate serious safety events, pulmonary emboli and venous thromboses (life-threatening blood clots), hospital-acquired infections and occurrences of iatrogenic pneumothorax (collapsed lung).
At Memorial Hermann, safety is everyone’s responsibility. To recognize high-reliability behavior, we created the Memorial Hermann High Reliability Certified Zero Award for hospitals that go a year or longer without adverse events in federally defined categories. We call the award “certified” because these results are formally certified in monthly reports to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Since the program started in 2011, Memorial Hermann hospitals have earned more than 100 Certified Zero Awards for avoiding hospital-acquired infections and other conditions causing patient harm for a year or more.
Leaders, staff and physicians compare monthly outcomes to goals set at 100 percent for quality measure performance and 0 percent for preventable harm.

Breakthroughs in Patient Safety
Heightened attention to detail means employees are more likely to detect subtle variances in complex situations. The cornerstone of our performance improvement efforts, Breakthroughs in Patient Safety (BIPS), encourages employees to think critically, communicate openly, ask questions and consider alternatives – behaviors that foster collaboration and reduce errors. To sustain our performance improvement gains, employees are reminded continuously of high-reliability techniques and nationally recognized actions that prevent patient harm and support quality care. Leaders, staff and physicians compare monthly outcomes to goals set at 100 percent for quality measure performance and 0 percent for preventable harm.

Red Rules for Patient Safety
Three Red Rules – safety practices that must be observed regardless of how urgent or emergent a situation is – were developed as part of the BIPS program.
1. Verify with two patient identifiers before acting.
2. Time-out before invasive and high-risk procedures
3. Two-provider check prior to administration of blood transfusions and high-risk medications.

STAR
Employees are trained to take a one-second stop – called STAR for Stop, Think, Act and Review – before injecting a medication or taking another action that could affect patient safety. The one-second stop has proven to reduce errors by 90 percent, saving countless lives.

Electronic Health Record and CPOE
We implemented a comprehensive electronic health record (EHR) in all patient care areas, including computerized physician order entry (CPOE) or eOrdering in the majority of Memorial Hermann hospitals, automated computerized decision support and barcode bedside medication administration to ensure that the right patient receives the right medication.
Making Processes Safer with High-Reliability Interventions and Process Improvements

We can’t make our employees perfect, but we can develop processes that encourage a level of mindfulness that enables us to catch potential errors before they do harm. Read more about how Memorial Hermann is making healthcare safer and better for patients.

Reducing Hospital-Acquired Infections to Zero
In July 2007, interdisciplinary teams started to work on the elimination of central line-associated bloodstream infection (CLABSI) and ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP). After the first few months of reduced infections, a culture of patient safety and effectiveness took root and continued to evolve. The cornerstone was team-building among all interdisciplinary team members, which we encouraged with transparency of data, sharing of challenges, building trust and relationships, and a united commitment to improve patient outcomes. These unit-based teams became well versed in quality improvement principles and were willing to report safety concerns and drive ideas for future improvement. This level of accountability contributed to significant, sustained decreases in the rate of CLABSIs and VAPs, which were previously assumed to be unavoidable complications of invasive medical procedures. Our healthcare teams began to recognize healthcare-associated infections as a care failure and focused their energy on complete elimination.

Preventing Medical Errors with Clinical Decision Support
Led by physicians and clinical and operational system leaders, our System Quality and Patient Safety Council endorsed the use of computer alerts to avoid potential errors in patient care. When an alert causes clinicians to cancel or modify a potentially harmful action, we tabulate it as a “good catch.” Good catches, which now occur about 1,000 times a month in our hospitals, form one of the three sides of our Patient Safety Triangle, along with close calls and serious safety events.
Evidence-Based Care Benefits
Patients Across the Continuum

The Memorial Hermann Electronic Health Record (EHR) allows secured access to patient medical records within our facilities and across healthcare domains. In 2006, MHMD, the Memorial Hermann Physician Network, recognized that equipping physicians with office-based EHRs enhanced their ability to share clinical data and report quality performance as part of the MHMD Clinical Integration Program. eClinicalWorks, subsidized by MHMD, has transformed the physician practices that have deployed it, allowing physicians to report their quality scores based on nationally recognized measures.

Within the EHR, a Medical Power Plan (MPP) allows physician and nursing ordering, automated documentation and aggregated outcomes. The MPP includes an evidence-based information tool that provides clinicians with up-to-date information about best practices.

Project MEDSAFE

MEDSAFE increases reliability at the point of medication administration by providing an electronic double-check that compares, at the patient’s bedside, medical barcode information against a verified physician’s order. MEDSAFE aligns Memorial Hermann with the National Patient Safety Goals to improve the accuracy of patient identification, improve the effectiveness of communication among caregivers and improve the safety of administering medications.

“...By moving upstream in the care process, we’ve taken a more active and effective role in managing the health of the populations we serve.”
Preventing Operating Room Safety Events
Memorial Hermann has concentrated its focus in the operating room on reducing avoidable harm events. As part of Memorial Hermann’s systematic high-reliability process, the use of RFID-tagged sponges were implemented for all open surgical procedures. In addition to routine sponge counts, all open surgical patients are scanned with a RFID detection wand before the incision is closed. This process led to the detection and removal of sponges that might have been retained because the sponge count was thought to be “correct.” This is an excellent example of a resilient, high-reliability process with multiple opportunities for a “good catch.” Our physicians and operating room staff also use the Surgical Safety Checklist, modeled after the World Health Organization checklist. Compliance with the checklist process is audited and reported as part of each hospital’s Monthly Operating Review.

Ultrasound-Guided Central Line Placements Reduce Iatrogenic Pneumothorax
Our focus on reliable use of preventive measures led us to recognize that iatrogenic pneumothorax and accidental puncture or laceration caused by central line insertion could be prevented by evidence-based use of ultrasound guidance. A systemwide effort made ultrasound devices immediately available for central line insertion and ensured that providers inserting central lines were trained to use the devices.
The Savings from More Coordinated, Safer Healthcare

Insurers partner with Memorial Hermann providers because they know that safer care leads to better clinical outcomes and lower costs for consumers. Their plan members enjoy a more coordinated healthcare experience, because their relevant health information is shared electronically between hospitals and network physicians. Timely preventive care and screenings help physicians identify patients at risk before they get sick. For patients with chronic conditions, physicians and care managers work as a team to help members manage their health. By moving upstream in the care process, we’ve taken a more active and effective role in managing the health of the populations we serve.

Delivering Value to Payors and Members
MHMD is the contracted network for Memorial Hermann, the largest employer in Houston. In conjunction with Memorial Hermann’s health plan, MHMD physicians are encouraging their patients to take a proactive approach to health management.

Requiring employees to establish a physician relationship by choosing a PCP and taking biometric health screenings is contributing to earlier diagnosis and intervention. For employees and family members with chronic illnesses, coordinated disease management has provided a continuum of care that helps to better manage chronic illnesses and reduce hospital readmissions.

Through our combined efforts, we have been successful in reducing total healthcare costs of the Memorial Hermann employee population. Through education and wellness programs, these members are making the necessary lifestyle changes to stay healthy and avoid illness.
Connecting Our Community Through Integrated Information Systems

Using a secure, encrypted electronic network, Memorial Hermann Information Exchange (MHiE) facilitates access to important clinical information to provide safer, more efficient and more equitable patient-centered care. Both providers and patients can choose to participate in the community-wide information network.

With patient consent, records can be compiled and shared between treating physicians, allowing for continuity of care across multiple settings by making critical information available at the point of care.

MHiE Image Gateway provides secure viewing and sharing of medical images. The gateway supports the regional trauma network as well as physician-to-physician and imaging center-to-physician image sharing. Having image access avoids the expense of additional studies, eliminating duplicate tests and radiation overexposure risks to patients.

With the click of a mouse, providers can access or share imaging data with other exchange members, including physicians, radiology groups, referring hospitals, specialists, Memorial Hermann hospitals and imaging centers.
The journey to high-reliability healthcare demands the highest quality clinical and administrative leadership committed to achieving a shared goal. At Memorial Hermann, we’ve created a culture that says “every patient, every day, every time,” which is critical to sustaining zero events of harm. The result: All Memorial Hermann facilities have achieved demonstrated results in clinical outcomes, patient safety and patient satisfaction. Our processes and the commitment of our employees and affiliated physicians have made these achievements possible. Our vision is bold, and the journey continues. We invite you to join us.