

UCSD Medical Center Named Most Wired and Most Wireless by Hospitals and Health Networks

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Alma Lucy Fisher

For the second consecutive year, UCSD Medical Center is among the nation's "Most Wired" and "Most Wireless" hospitals, according to *Hospital and Health Networks*, a publication of the American Hospital Association. The magazine ranks UCSD Medical Center as one of the 100 "Most Wired" and one of the 25 "Most Wireless" in its ninth annual survey. Both awards recognize the highly developed technology infrastructure that allows UCSD Medical Center to use multiple technologies to seamlessly connect clinical systems and improve care.

The report credits the top-ranking hospitals with having successfully adopted information technology to improve patient outcomes, streamline clinical practices and decrease the occurrence of medical errors. As a result, these hospitals have improved quality, satisfaction, customer service, and patient care through their use of technology.

"We are very proud to achieve this recognition a second time. This honor is a reflection of UCSD's commitment to utilizing state-of-the-art technology to provide the very best service and care to our patients," said Richard Liekweg, chief executive officer of UCSD Medical Center. "As the region's only academic medical center, our role is to provide leadership through the use of innovative treatments and technologies. This honor is a testimony to the successful efforts of our faculty and staff to serve our patients and the community with leading edge health care."

According to Josh Lee, M.D., Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine and medical director of Information Systems at the UCSD Medical Center, "Most Wired" refers to an interconnected system that allows patient care to be comprehensive and integrated. "Most Wireless" is based on UCSD Medical Center's extensive secure wireless presence that brings information to the bedside, allowing the care provider to spend more time with the patient.

"Our decision to implement these technologies has two dimensions: quality and efficiency. Quality means better care, increased safety and improved outcomes, and efficiency allows us to manage resources and costs to improve the affordability of health care," said Edward Babakanian, chief information officer, UCSD Medical Center.

"UCSD Medical Center has achieved a lot, and earned recognition for these efforts, but we do not simply rest on the fact that we are among the top hospitals in our use of technology. Ultimately, the challenge is not how much technology an organization should have, but how effectively the technology is used. We are already planning more significant improvements in the next generation of information system applications over the next five years," Babakanian added.

An example of a recent initiative implemented at UCSD Medical Center is a bar-coded patient wristband technology. The health care provider scans the patient's wristband with a portable computer to ensure the correct patient is receiving the correct medication. The new barcoding program at UCSD is the only such system in the San Diego region, outside of the Veterans Affairs San Diego Medical Center.

UCSD hospitals were among the first in the country to institute a bi-directional computerized physician order entry (CPOE) system, enabling a doctor to enter a prescription order on line in a program that is linked directly to the pharmacy's computer system. When the pharmacist has validated the order, the medication is distributed through Pyxis, an automated dispensing system used on all nursing units that is electronically connected to the patient's pharmacy profile. When a nurse accesses a patient profile and selects a medication, the appropriate drawer opens for retrieval of that medication. The added capability of the new bar code system further reduces the potential for error.

Media Contact: Alma Lucy Fisher, (619) 543-6163