UC San Diego Health System Receives Leapfrog Group's Top Hospitals Award for its Commitment to High Quality Care

December 06, 2011 |

The Leapfrog Group's annual class of top hospitals – 65 from a field of nearly 1200 – was announced December 6th in Washington, D.C. and included UC San Diego Health System in San Diego, California for the first time. The 2011 list includes university and other teaching hospitals, children's hospitals and community hospitals in rural, suburban and urban settings. The selection is based on the results of the Leapfrog Group's national survey that measures hospitals' performance in crucial areas of patient safety and quality.

"UC San Diego Health System's faculty and staff are the heroes whose commitment to quality and patient safety has lead to this recognition," said Tom McAfee, MD, interim chief executive officer and dean of Clinical Affairs for UC San Diego Health Sciences.

The survey, which launched in 2001, focuses on four critical areas of patient safety: 1) the use of computer physician order entry (CPOE) to prevent medication errors; 2) standards for doing high-risk procedures; 3) protocols and policies to reduce medical errors and other safe practices recommended by the National Quality Forum; and 4) adequate nurse and physician staffing. In addition, hospitals are measured on their progress in preventing infections and other hospital-acquired conditions and adopting policies on the handling of serious medical errors, among other things.

"All hospitals that voluntarily participate in The Leapfrog Group's annual survey deserve recognition for their willingness to publicly report critical patient safety and quality information to their communities," said Leah Binder, CEO of the Leapfrog Group. "However, only a handful of these hospitals achieve excellence by meeting these national standards and earning Leapfrog's highest distinction — Top Hospital."

As a 2011 Top Hospital, UC San Diego Health System fully met the standards for implementing CPOE and for carefully testing their system with Leapfrog's CPOE Evaluation Tool. As part of this

standard, physicians must enter at least 75 percent of medication orders through a CPOE system, and demonstrate, via a test, that their inpatient CPOE system can alert physicians to at least 50 percent of common, serious prescribing errors.

"The commitment of UC San Diego Health System's physicians to embrace electronic health records (EHR) and CPOE was instrumental to achieving Top Hospital," stated McAfee. "When our faculty leadership voted to fund the implementation of an EHR in 2004, it started a revolution in how information is communicated and medicine is practiced at UC San Diego Health System. The real leadership though, has come from the physicians who embraced information technology very early on."

To make the Top Hospital list, a hospital must also:

- → Fully meet Leapfrog's stringent performance standards for at least 50 percent of the complex, high-risk surgeries and procedures, such as heart bypass, heart angioplasty, aortic valve replacement, abdominal aortic aneurism repair, bariatric surgery, esophogectomy, pancreatectomy, and high-risk newborn deliveries done in that particular hospital.

- → Fully meet Leapfrog's standard for ICU physician staffing to ensure that ICU patients are managed or co-managed by intensivists who: a) are present during daytime hours and provide clinical care exclusively in the ICU and, b) when not present on site or via telemedicine, return pages at least 95 percent of the time within five minutes and arrange for a certified physician or physician extender to reach ICU patients within five minutes.

- → Achieve a value score of 69 or better as calculated through Leapfrog's Hospital Recognition Program (LHRP). This score is calculated by combining a hospital's scores for quality and resource use (which include all of the standards on Leapfrog's Hospital Survey), with quality given more weight.

"Leapfrog congratulates UC San Diego Health System's Hillcrest facility for its commitment to providing safe, quality care to the San Diego community, and on being named a 2011 Leapfrog Top Hospital," said Binder.

The Leapfrog Group
The Leapfrog Group is a coalition of public and private purchasers of employee health coverage founded a decade ago to work for improvements in health care safety, quality and affordability. The annual survey is the only voluntary effort of its kind. More information is available at leapfroggroup.org ↗

UC San Diego Health System
Launched in 1966, UC San Diego Health System is the region's only academic health system, with

a mission of providing excellent and compassionate patient care, advancing medical discoveries and educating future health care professionals. It comprises UC San Diego Medical Center in Hillcrest, and UC San Diego Thornton Hospital, Moores Cancer Center, Shiley Eye Center, Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center and Jacobs Medical Center (slated to open in 2015) in La Jolla, as well as other primary and specialty practices of UC San Diego Medical Group. For more information, visit health.ucsd.edu

A complete list of 2011 Leapfrog Top Hospitals will be available at leapfroggroup.org ↗ on December 6, 2011 at 9 a.m. ET or an advance copy can be obtained by contacting Missy Danforth at mdanforth@leapfroggroup.org or 202-222-8344.

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