

## McMinnville hospital rates No. 1 in value, study says

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By Nicole Montesano

A company that specializes in producing data on U.S. hospitals has ranked McMinnville's Willamette Valley Medical Center No. 1 in value in the Portland Metropolitan Area, and among the top 15 percent nationally.

Data Advantage, which describes itself as a "health care information company specializing in independent, objective and comprehensive data solutions, used publicly available data to create a Hospital Value Index last year. Available online, it allows visitors to compare information from 4,500 hospitals across the country.

The study bases its analysis on mortality rates, re-admission rates, price and cost figures and patient satisfaction results. In its 2009 study, it accorded the Willamette Valley Medical Center an overall score of 63 percent, compared to a national average of 53 percent.

According to the study, smaller community hospitals typically fare better on value measures than large metropolitan teaching hospitals. However, that does not hold true across the board.

Yamhill County's only other hospital, the Providence Newberg Medical Center, earned a score of 45 percent. The study ranked Salem Hospital at 59 percent, the Providence St. Vincent Medical Center at 53 percent and the Legacy Meridian Park Hospital at 49 percent.

CEO Rosemari Davis welcomed the findings. "At a time when the nation is focused on discussing how to provide both high quality and affordable health care, it's great to earn recognition for doing just that," she said.

According to Data Advantage, the comparison study is particularly relevant because the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are planning to change the way hospitals are reimbursed for care next year.

CMS requires all hospitals that receive Medicare funding to conduct patient satisfaction surveys on a random-sample basis. Those with higher value scores on such measures will qualify for higher reimbursement rates.

Davis said the idea is to help provide more uniform care across the nation and ensure all patients receive a certain standard of minimum care. Changing the reimbursement rates to reflect hospital scores will help motivate all hospitals to keep their scores high, by focusing on quality of care and patient satisfaction, she said.

Davis said she was particularly pleased to see Willamette Valley rated at 96 percent on clinical care. She said it stood out on several core measures of quality.

But she said she isn't totally satisfied because her patients aren't totally satisfied.

"We definitely have room with patient satisfaction, in some areas, to improve," she said. "It seems to be more on the side of patient perception, patient satisfaction, communication. We need to always be trying to improve that area.

"I want to do better in all of them," Davis said. "We take care of people, and so we want to do the very, very best we're capable of, and that changes as technology and pharmaceuticals change."