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New Report: Hospitals Improving Performance on Key Patient Safety Measures Surpassing Pre-pandemic Levels

AHA worked with Vizient to analyze data from hospitals across the country; please use the report and AHA tools to share how your organization is focused on patient safety and quality

The AHA today released a [new report](#) showing that hospital and health system performance on key patient safety and quality measures was better in the first quarter of 2024 than it was right before the COVID-19 pandemic and that hospitals made these improvements while caring for more complex patients with more significant health care needs.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Despite being sicker and more complex, hospitalized patients in the first quarter of 2024 were on average over 20% more likely to survive than expected given the severity of their illnesses compared to the fourth quarter of 2019.
- Based on this analysis, the AHA projects that while caring for sicker patients, hospitals' efforts to improve safety led to 200,000 Americans hospitalized between April 2023 and March 2024 surviving episodes of care they wouldn't have in 2019.
- Hospitals cared for more patients overall in the first quarter of 2024 than in the last quarter of 2019, including providing care to a sicker, more complex patient population.
- Hospitals' central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI) and catheter-associated urinary tract (CAUTI) infections in the first quarter of 2024 were at rates lower than those recorded in 2019.
- Not only did multiple key preventive health screenings rapidly rebound to pre-pandemic levels, but ongoing improvement has led to a 60%-to-80% increase in breast, colon and cervical cancer screenings compared to 2019.

Download AHA's Patient Safety report [here](#).

AHA TAKE

The data in this report underscore the resilience and unwavering commitment of hospitals and health systems — and the millions of hospital team members across the country — to deliver better care and outcomes to the patients and communities they

serve. While hospitals are proud of the progress they continue to make, they also recognize that there is still work to be done.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Use the report** to elevate the national conversation about how your organization, and hospitals and health systems across the country, are continuously working to advance patient safety and quality every day. Sept. 17 is World Patient Safety Day so it is an excellent opportunity to talk about your organization's efforts in these areas.
- **Use [AHA's digital toolkit](#)** to share how hospitals are making progress on key patient safety measures to advance health for patients and communities.
- **Participate in AHA's Patient Safety Initiative and take advantage of AHA's resources for hospitals and health systems.** The AHA at the end of 2023 launched the Patient Safety Initiative — a national effort to reaffirm hospital and health system leadership and commitment to patient safety. The initiative: provides hospitals with tools and data to advance patient safety; gives hospitals a platform and resources to tell their improvement stories; highlights successful local innovations that can be applicable across the country; and informs public policy discussions about the most effective policy steps to support, spread and sustain safety improvement. Visit [AHA's Patient Safety Initiative webpage](#) for more information and resources. If your organization has not joined the Patient Safety Initiative, please consider joining more than 1,700 organizations and participating.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have further questions about the report, please contact Chris DeRienzo, M.D., AHA chief physician executive and senior vice president, at cderienzo@aha.org. If you have questions about the Patient Safety Initiative, please email patientsafety@aha.org.