

Hand-Hygiene Safe Practices

Developed for The Leapfrog Group by Castlight Health®



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2014 Leapfrog Hospital Survey results

Every year, The Leapfrog Group and its membership (employers and other organizations that purchase health insurance coverage for employees and their families, as well as business coalitions on health) ask every adult general acute care and freestanding pediatric hospital in the U.S. to voluntarily complete the Leapfrog Hospital Survey. Leapfrog uses the survey data to publicly report on issues that matter to health care purchasers and consumers, including high-risk surgeries, maternity care, hospital-acquired infections, and more. Measures included on the Leapfrog Hospital Survey are endorsed by the National Quality Forum and/or aligned with those of other significant data-collection entities, including the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Joint Commission. Leapfrog partners with the Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality at Johns Hopkins Medicine to review survey measures and standards, and updates them annually to reflect the latest science. Additionally, panels of experts volunteer to meet regularly to review the survey measures and recommend performance standards for each subject area covered on the Leapfrog Hospital Survey.

This is the fifth in a series of reports Castlight Health is preparing on the results of the 2014 Leapfrog Hospital Survey. To read the first four reports on Maternity Care, High-Risk Procedures, Computerized Physician Order Entry, and Nursing Workforce Safe Practices, [click here](#).

Hand Hygiene

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), hand hygiene is one of the most important and effective means to stop the spread of infections in health care facilities. Many hospital-acquired infections are caused by pathogens transmitted from one patient to another via the contaminated hands of health care workers. The CDC estimates that on any given day about one in 25 hospital patients has at least one hospital-acquired infection, and in about 10% of these cases, patients will die as a result.¹

Any clinician or health care worker entering a patient's room should wash her or his hands upon entry. Compliance with hand hygiene not only safeguards patients against contracting disease, but it also protects health care workers.

Studies on whether clinicians follow good hand-hygiene practices show disturbingly varied results.² Unfortunately, there's no standardized measurement for reporting hand hygiene compliance to-date. Instead, Leapfrog asks hospitals to report on whether they have policies in place and the accountability requirements necessary to achieve universal compliance with hand hygiene. These practices are endorsed by the National Quality Forum (NQF).

Leapfrog's recommended hand-hygiene safe practices aim to minimize hospital-acquired infections through mandated and enforced proper handwashing protocols for all staff.



¹ <http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/surveillance/index.html>

² Bischoff WE, Reynolds TM, Sessler CN, Edmond MB, Wenzel RP. Handwashing Compliance by Health Care Workers: The Impact of Introducing an Accessible, Alcohol-Based Hand Antiseptic. *Arch Intern Med.* 2000;160(7):1017-1021. doi:10.1001/archinte.160.7.1017.

Leapfrog's standard for hand hygiene:

Hospital must adhere to 10 recommended safe practices related to hand hygiene, including:

- Hospital-wide education and training around hand hygiene
- Submitting a report on hand-hygiene recommendations and results to the hospital's Board of Directors
- Holding clinical leadership, senior administrative leadership and patient safety officers accountable for hand hygiene
- Documenting expenditures related to hand-hygiene education
- Implementing policies and procedures to prevent hospital-acquired infections (HAI) due to inadequate hand hygiene
- Implementing or monitoring performance improvement programs related to the prevention of HAI through hand-hygiene compliance

Hospitals achieve high adoption of hand-hygiene programs, with urban hospitals outperforming rural

The 2014 Leapfrog Hospital Survey shows continued progress in the adoption of important hand-hygiene practices, but there's much more to be done. Key findings include:

- The percentage of hospitals meeting all 10 of Leapfrog's hand-hygiene safe practices increased from 69% in 2013 to 77% in 2014.
- Urban hospitals continue to outperform rural hospitals and show a greater year-over-year improvement in meeting Leapfrog's standards.
- There is significant geographic variation in the adoption of hand-hygiene safe practices: in five states, more than 90% of reporting hospitals met all practices, but in six states, only 60% or less of reporting hospitals met all practices.
- Almost all (99%) reporting hospitals achieved hospital-wide education and training on preventing hospital-acquired infections related to inadequate hand hygiene
- Hospitals had the most trouble holding patient safety officers directly accountable for improvements in hand hygiene through performance reviews or compensation. Only 87% of all reporting hospitals indicated they have this safe practice in place.

Hand-hygiene safe practices

Because of substantial evidence linking hand hygiene and hospital-acquired infections, hospitals should strive for 100% compliance with all 10 hand-hygiene safe practices. Every hospital in the U.S. should have board-mandated education and compliance policies for hand hygiene. The public also deserves to know which hospitals have strong hand-hygiene programs in place.

The survey results detailed in this report focus on hospital practices involving hand hygiene that are derived from Safe Practice 19 – Hand Hygiene, from the National Quality Forum’s Safe Practices for Better Healthcare – 2010 Update. The systematic, universal implementation of NQF-endorsed safe practices can lead to sizable and long-lasting improvements in health care safety.

Leapfrog measures how hospitals apply key pieces of a well-designed hand-hygiene program to keep patients safe. Leapfrog calls upon health care organization leaders and governance boards to proactively assess the safety of their organizations and take action that continually improves the safety level, and thus, the quality of the care provided.³ Leapfrog divides its hand-hygiene safe-practice questions into four areas:

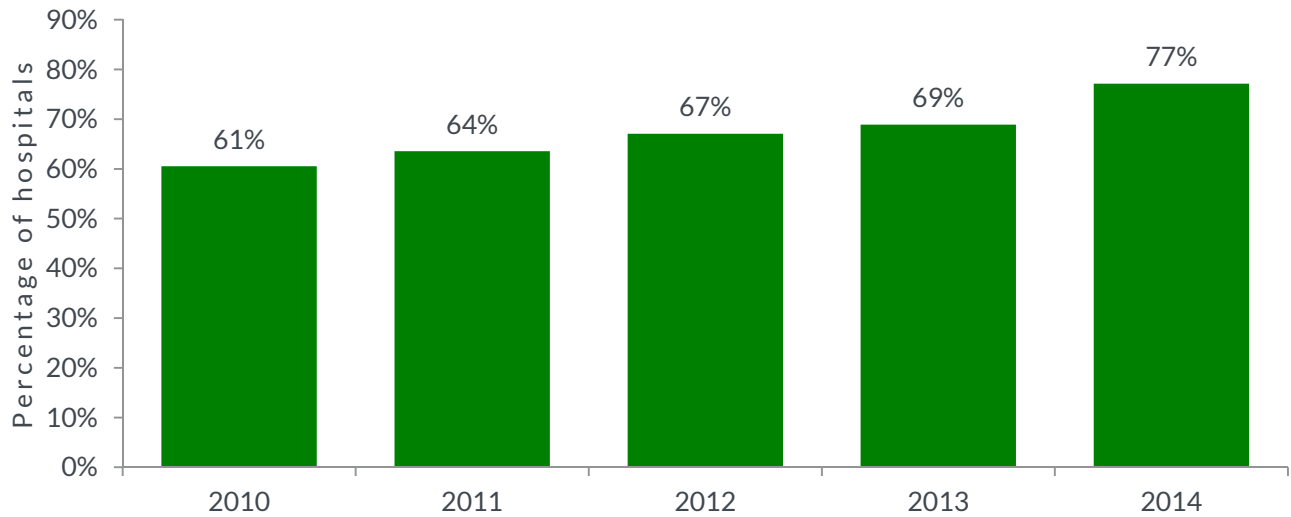
- **Awareness** — Does the hospital undertake a hospital-wide educational effort and identify performance improvement activities related to improving hand hygiene?
- **Accountability** — Does the hospital hold clinical and administrative leaders accountable through performance reviews or compensation terms for preventing hospital-acquired infections through good hand-hygiene practices?
- **Ability** — Does the hospital conduct staff training and provide the budget needed to ensure safe hand hygiene?
- **Action** — Does the hospital implement hand-hygiene policies and procedures across the entire organization to prevent hospital-acquired infections?

Leapfrog’s hand-hygiene safe practices ensure that hospitals follow processes and policies to minimize the risk of hospital-acquired infections, that hospital-acquired infections and prevention practices are constantly being reviewed, and that hospital leaders are held accountable for improvements (see Appendix A for list of practices).

The percentage of hospitals meeting all 10 hand-hygiene safe practices continues to increase: 77% of reporting hospitals earned all possible points, up from 69% in 2013.

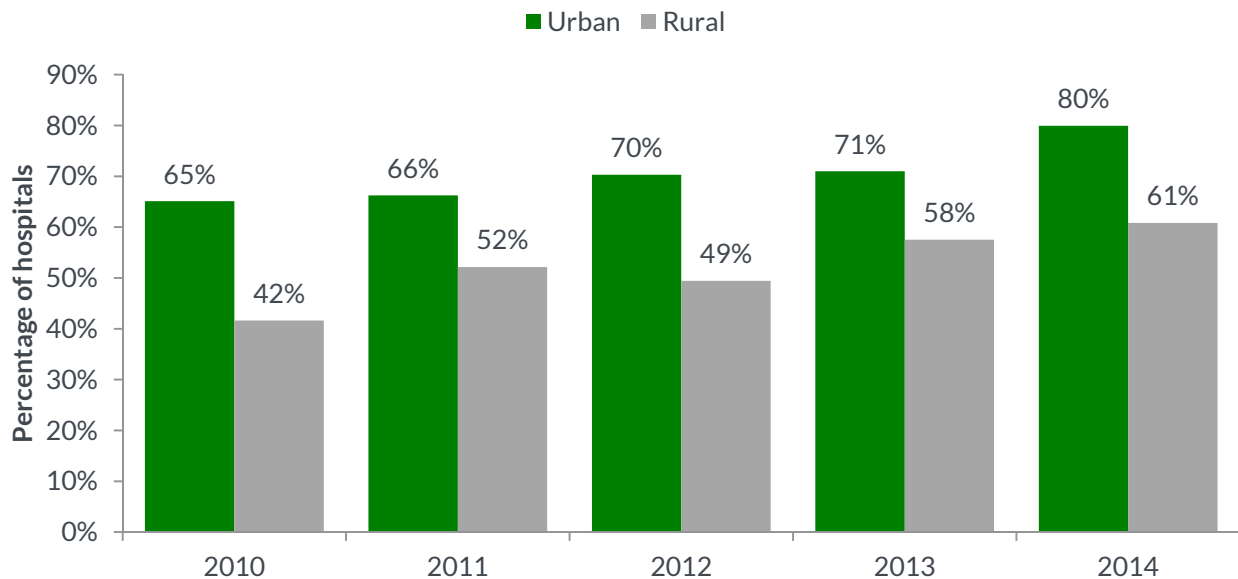
³ “Safe Practices for Better Healthcare,” National Quality Forum,
http://www.qualityforum.org/Publications/2009/03/Safe_Practices_for_Better_Healthcare%E2%80%93932009_Update.aspx

Percentage of hospitals meeting all hand hygiene safe practices



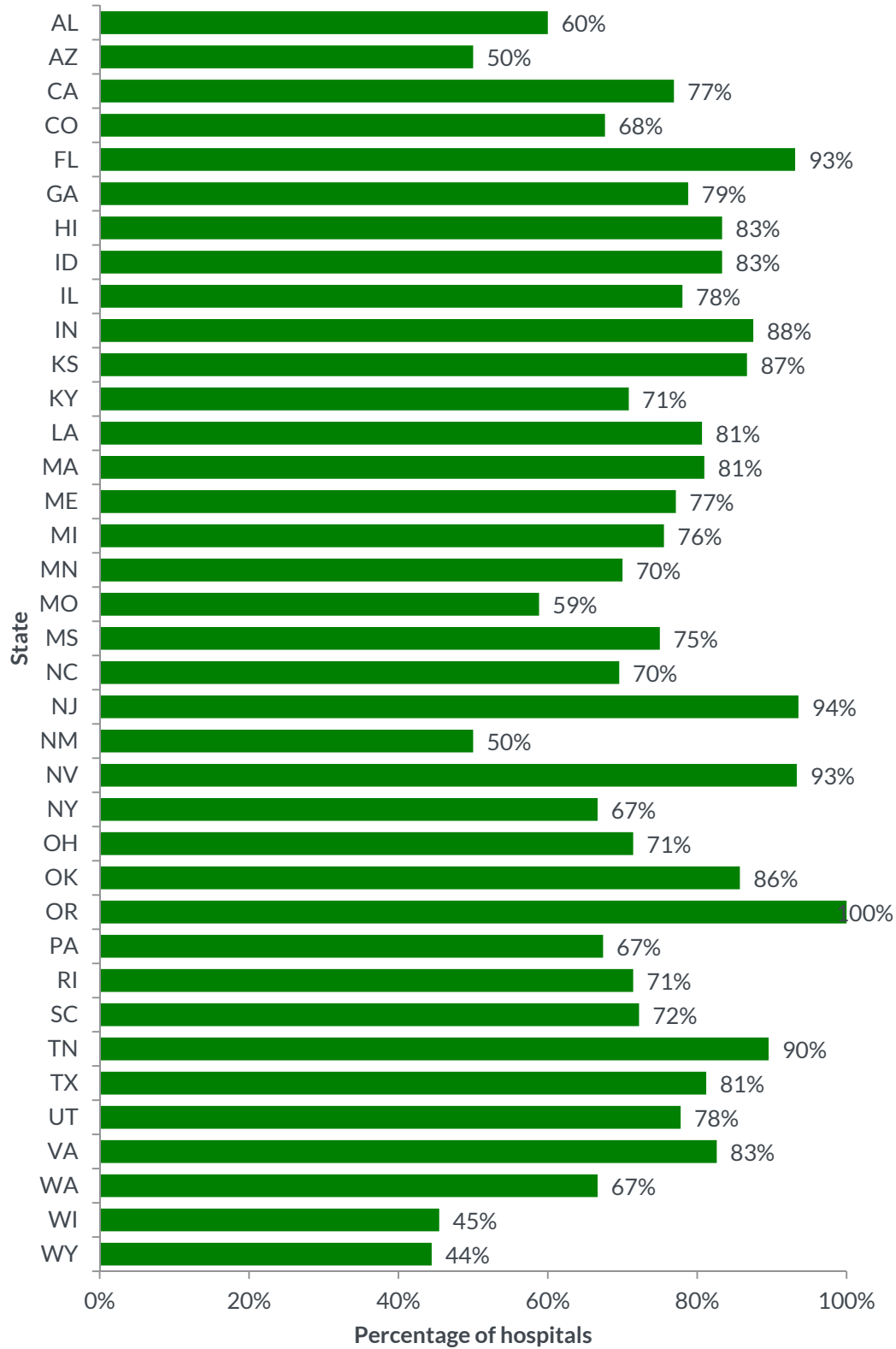
As in prior years, urban hospitals outperformed rural ones: 80% of urban hospitals met all hand-hygiene practices, compared to only 61% of rural hospitals.

Percentage of hospitals meeting all hand-hygiene safe practices, by area



There's also significant geographic variation in the adoption of hand-hygiene safe practices. In five states, greater than 90% of reporting hospitals met every practice, while in six states, only 60% or less of hospitals met all the practices.

Percentage of hospitals meeting all hand hygiene safe practices, by state



Conclusion and call to action

Good hand-hygiene practices are critical to the safety and quality of any hospital. While hospitals are making steady progress in ensuring they have an adequate hand-hygiene program in place, 23% of hospitals still have not ensured that all 10 Leapfrog safe practices are implemented. Many hospitals have already taken steps to ensure that they have proper hand-hygiene practices in place to minimize the risk of hospital-acquired infections. Below are additional steps that hospitals, patients, and other stakeholders can take to ensure they receive the best care.

- **Hospitals** are encouraged to use Leapfrog’s hand-hygiene safe practices as a checklist detailing the critical elements of an effective hand-hygiene program. They should also continue working toward a safer environment for patients and can learn from other hospitals that have achieved high standards of care.
- **Employers** should urge hospitals to complete the Leapfrog Hospital Survey and encourage their employees to choose hospitals that follow safe practices related to hand hygiene—leading to improved care.
- **Patients and families** that need hospital care are encouraged to consult the Leapfrog Hospital Survey results before choosing a hospital, and to select one that has implemented all of the safe practices related to hand hygiene. Patients and their families can play a role in preventing infections by practicing good hand hygiene themselves and by asking or reminding their caregivers to frequently wash their hands.

Choosing a hospital is one of the most important decisions people can make. Hospitals, employers, and patients together can help ensure that those who enter the hospital will have the greatest possible chance for a positive outcome.

To learn more about the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, go to [The Leapfrog Group](#).

Appendix A: Hand-hygiene safe practices

In regard to preventing hospital-acquired infections related to inadequate hand hygiene, our organization has done the following or has had the following in place within the last 12 months:

- a. Undertaken a hospital-wide educational effort addressing the frequency and severity of hospital-acquired infections within our patient population and the potential impact of performance-improvement practices related to improvements in hand hygiene.
- b. Submitted a report to the Board (governance) with recommendations for measurable improvement targets.

In regard to preventing hospital-acquired infections related to inadequate hand hygiene, our organization has done the following or has had the following in place within the last 12 months:

- a. Held clinical leadership directly accountable for this patient safety area through performance reviews or compensation.
- b. Held senior administrative leadership directly accountable for this patient safety area through performance reviews or compensation.
- c. Held the person responsible for patient safety directly accountable for improvements in performance through performance reviews or compensation.
- d. Reported to the Board (governance) the results of the measurable improvement targets.

In regard to preventing hospital-acquired infections related to inadequate hand hygiene, our organization has done the following or has had the following in place within the last 12 months:

- a. Conducted staff education/knowledge transfer and skill-development programs, with attendance documented.
- b. Documented expenditures on staff education related to this Safe Practice in the previous year.

In regard to preventing hospital-acquired infections related to inadequate hand hygiene, our organization has done the following within the last 12 months or has had the following in place during the last 12 months and updates are made regularly:

- a. Implemented explicit organizational policies and procedures across the entire organization to prevent hospital-acquired infections due to inadequate hand hygiene including CDC guidelines with category IA, IB, or IC evidence.
- b. Implemented a formal performance-improvement program addressing hospital-acquired infections focused on hand-hygiene compliance, with regular performance measurement and tracking improvement
OR
monitored a previously implemented hospital-wide performance-improvement program that measures, and demonstrates full achievement of, the impact of this specific Safe Practice.

About The Leapfrog Group:

National nonprofit watchdog The Leapfrog Group was founded in 2000 by employers and other purchasers of health benefits to collect data from U.S. hospitals and publicly report their performance by facility. Leapfrog has been the nation's premier advocate of transparency to galvanize giant leaps forward in quality and safety of care. Leapfrog's data by hospital from the [Leapfrog Hospital Survey](#) and [Hospital Safety Score](#) allow purchasers of health care to structure contracts and purchasing toward the highest performing hospitals, while providing consumers with potentially lifesaving information on hospital quality. The biannual Hospital Safety Score, which assigns letter grades to hospitals based on how safe they are for patients, empowers consumers to search for a local 'A' hospital for their life-long health care needs.

About Castlight Health:

Castlight Health, Inc. (NYSE:CSLT) is the leader in Enterprise Healthcare Management. We believe great healthcare builds great business and U.S. enterprises can gain control over the \$620 billion spent annually on healthcare, transforming a crippling cost into a strategic business advantage. Recognized as [a top 2014 software platform](#) by the HR Technology Conference & Exposition, Castlight's Enterprise Healthcare Cloud enables employers to understand and manage all their healthcare investments while helping employees make the best possible healthcare decisions. Castlight is a great place to work, honored with a [Glassdoor Employees' Choice award](#) and recognized by Rock Health for Diversity in Leadership. For more information visit www.castlighthealth.com. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and Like us on [Facebook](#).

