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Study: Florida hospital care good, patients unhappy

Florida hospitals have among the best quality of care in the nation, but score poorly in patient satisfaction, according to a study conducted by hospital rating service CareChex.

The finding could mean that other factors besides care have patients riled. Or, perhaps Florida patients just don't know how good they have it compared to other states.

CareChex, a division of Comparion Medical Analytics, conducted the quality study using data from the federal government and other payers. The patient satisfaction scores came from a federal survey of patients' feelings about the hospital's performance, communication with staff, pain control, the hospital environment and other factors.

In the quality ranking, Florida hospitals were in eighth place out of 50 states and the District of Columbia, which ranked last. Ohio hospitals topped the list.

Breaking it down into hospitals in the 50-largest metropolitan areas, West Palm Beach-Boca Raton hospitals ranked seventh (the best in Florida) and Miami-Fort Lauderdale ranked in the middle, at 24th. The Grand Rapids, Mich., area had the best hospital quality, while Las Vegas hospitals were the worst, according to CareChex.

The hospital market in West Palm-Boca Raton had top-5 quality rankings in the areas of cardiac care, major cardiac surgery, orthopedic care, neurological care, pulmonary care and cancer care, where its hospitals had the top score.

One would think that all of that high-quality care would translate into happy patients, but far from it. West Palm Beach-Boca Raton hospitals finished last in CareChex's patient satisfaction ranking.

Florida hospitals were 49th in patient satisfaction, with Miami-Fort Lauderdale hospitals 41st among metropolitan areas.

The most satisfied hospital patients were in Vermont and the Greensboro-Winston-Salem, N.C., metropolitan area.