

# Hospitals Score Well on MI, Heart Failure Care

BY MARY ELLEN SCHNEIDER

U.S. hospitals have significantly improved the care they provide for patients with myocardial infarction, heart failure, and pneumonia, according to a report from the Joint Commission.

Hospitals accredited by the commission are adhering to quality measures for MI patients 96.7% of the time, up from 86.9% just 7 years earlier. The results are part of the Joint Commission's annual report on quality and safety.

The report also highlights major improvements in heart failure and pneumonia. In 2008, hospitals provided evidence-based heart failure care 91.6% of the time, up from 59.7% in 2002. Evidence-based pneumonia care was provided 92.9% of the time in 2008, up from 72.3% in 2002. (See box.)

These national findings are based on aggregated data drawn from all Joint Commission-accredited hospitals be-

tween 2002 and 2008. Scores for care for heart failure, for example, are composite scores based on a set of specific quality measures in that area. There is no composite score for surgical care, which is

measured according to several subcategories, including antibiotic use. Children's asthma care was surveyed for the first time in 2008, with both subcategories scoring over 99%.

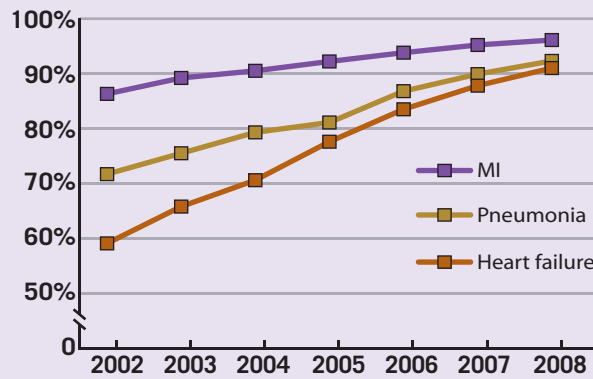
The findings are cause for celebration, according to Jerod M. Loeb, Ph.D., executive vice president for quality measurement and research at the Joint Commission in Oakbrook Terrace, Ill. "This improvement translates into significant enhancements in terms of morbidity and mortality across the conditions that we're measuring," he said in an interview.

In addition to improvements on several measure sets over time, the report also found that hospitals are getting more consistent. For 8 of the 28 measures that the Joint Commission tracked in 2008, hospitals had consistently high performance. Approximately 90% of hospitals scored 90% or more on those eight measures in 2008.

Despite the successes documented in the report, hospitals are still struggling on a few measures. For example, in 2008, hospitals scored only 52.4% on providing fibrinolytic therapy to heart attack patients within 30 minutes of arrival. Similarly, in 2008, hospitals scored only 60.3% on providing antibiotics to ICU pneumonia patients within 24 hours of arrival. Both of the measures were first introduced in 2005.

*Improving America's Hospitals: The Joint Commission's Annual Report on Quality and Safety 2009 is available online at [www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org).*

## Hospital Adherence to Joint Commission Composite Quality Measures



Note: A total of 3,219 accredited hospitals contributed data.  
Source: The Joint Commission

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