



AZ hospitals are better than patients perceive

HEALTH CARE

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As a group, Arizona ranks No. 15 in the nation for the quality of care in its hospitals. But when it comes to patient satisfaction, the state's hospitals rank No. 42.

The results were in a report issued Sept. 20 by CareChex, a division of the Delta Group, which says it is the nation's largest privately held healthcare information services company.

Arizona had the sixth-biggest disparity between quality and patient satisfaction. Ohio had the biggest disparity, ranking No. 1 in quality care but No. 34 in satisfaction. Other states with larger disparities than Arizona were Delaware, Connecticut, Florida and Illinois.

In reverse, Vermont ranked No. 1 in patient satisfaction but No. 30 in quality. Other states where customer satisfaction outranked quality were Louisiana, Mississippi and Wyoming.

There was no disparity in Washington, D.C., which ranked at the bottom of both the list for quality and patient satisfaction.

In releasing the data, CareChex said, "With the rise of consumerism in health care, the hospital industry has realized that cost and quality alone are insufficient competitive differentiators in the minds of customers - service excellence also plays a vital role in determining value."

The disparity report was compiled using patient satisfaction reports of major hospitals against data from the most recent quality care study of three years of public data from the Hospital Quality Alliance and Center for Medicare and Medicaid Studies' Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems.

The reports did not identify any specific hospitals.