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March of Dimes Report Rewards New Jersey's Efforts to Reduce Preterm Births

New Jersey has made strides in reducing premature births, seeing its statewide grade upgraded to a B from prior years' C in an annual report card released by the March of Dimes.

New Jersey's preterm birth rate was 11.2 percent in 2012. Nationwide, the preterm birth rate dropped for the sixth consecutive year in 2012 to 11.5 percent. That's the lowest rate in 15 years, but overall the nation still earned a C on the March of Dimes report card.

Six states earned an A on the report. New Jersey was one of 19 states that received a B grade. New Jersey also was one of just seven states that saw their letter grades improve through their progress in fighting preterm births.

New Jersey was credited for reducing its overall rate of preterm birth from 11.7 in 2011 to 11.2 last year. New Jersey also scored points for its decline in the percent of women without health insurance (from 20.5 percent to 19.8 percent) and reduced rate for late preterm births (7.9 percent to 7.7 percent.)

New Jersey – as a state and as a community of healthcare providers – has devoted a great deal of attention to reducing preterm births through the Partnership for Patients initiative. In addition, the state Department of Health has teamed with NJHA's Institute for Quality and Patient Safety in a statewide Perinatal Collaborative. That effort has succeeded in promoting hospital policies that bar early elective deliveries before week 39 – with the results beginning to show in the state's falling late preterm birth rate.

Joint Commission: Nation's Hospitals Continue to Improve Quality Performance

A growing number of U.S. hospitals are rising to the challenge of improving healthcare quality and patient safety, according to *Improving America's Hospitals: The Joint Commission's Annual Report on Quality and Safety*.

The report addresses hospital performance on several quality measures in heart attack, pneumonia care, surgical care and more. It lists the nation's top-performing hospitals in each area. More hospitals than ever before are achieving distinction in top performers, according to the Joint Commission.

“This year, we are recognizing 77 percent more hospitals than last year – 479 more to be exact. Plus, another 20 percent of Joint Commission-accredited hospitals are only one measure short of the *Top Performer* goal,” said Joint Commission President and CEO Mark Chassin, MD. “That means more than half of Joint Commission-accredited hospitals have reached or have nearly reached *Top Performer* distinction. This truly shows that we are approaching a tipping point in hospital quality performance. The results prove once again that shared goals, data and solutions improve healthcare quality and contribute to better health outcomes for patients.”

All told, the nation’s hospitals improved their composite scores for adhering to identified care processes significantly in the last decade, including:

- Heart care: 98.8 percent compliance in 2012, an increase of 10.2 percent since 2002.
- Pneumonia care: 97.4 percent, an increase of 25 percent
- Surgical care: 98.3 percent, an increase of 16.2 percent
- Children’s asthma care: 95.5 percent, an increase of 15.7 percent.

New Jersey is well represented among the list of high-performing hospitals. [Click here](#) for the full report.

Save the Date

Nov. 11	Fall Perinatal Safety Collaborative Learning Session
Nov. 12	Adverse Drug Events Learning Session
Nov. 19	CAUTI Graduation
Dec. 5	Prevention of Healthcare-associated Infections across Healthcare Settings

Watch for our 2014 calendar—coming soon!

[Click here to register.](#)