**National Rural Health Association**

**Top 20 Award Winners and Best Practice Hospitals**

The National Rural Health Association names the Top 20 Critical Access Hospitals based on a larger document, the Top 100 CAHs, generated by iVantage Health Analytics. This source document sheds new, multi-dimensional light on the characteristics of the Top 100 performing critical access hospitals based on the Hospital Strength INDEX, the first nationwide hospital rating system to evaluate U.S. general acute care hospitals from market, value-based and financial perspectives.

**NRHA’s Top 20 Winners are the highest ranked (top 20)**

**among the Top 100 CAHs, named by iVantage Health Analytics.**

The Hospital Strength INDEX™ utilizes publicly available data sets to quantify overall hospital performance in ten pillars:

1 - Competitive Strength, 2 - Competitive Intensity, 3 - Market Size and Growth, 4 – Population Risk, 5 – Cost,   
6 – Charge, 7 - Quality, 8 - Outcomes, 9 - Patient Perspectives, and 10 - Financial Stability.

**Of these ten pillars, NRHA extracts the three pillars of**

**Quality, Patient Prespectives (Patient Satisfaction) and Financial Stability and recognizes**

**the 20 highest ranking CAHs qualifying in each, naming them a “Best Practice**” hospital in the designated category.

* **“Quality INDEX” -- Hospital Compare Process of Care Measures –** Each individual CMS process of care measure topic area (Acute Myocardial Infarction, Heart Failure, Pneumonia, Congestive Heart Failure, Surgical Care Improvement Program and Outpatient measures) is indexed across the range of national performance for each measure. The index scores are averaged to produce a single composite score. All available data are used in the calculation of composite scores. Missing data within measure sets are ignored.
* **“Patient Perspectives INDEX” -- Hospital Compare Hospital Consumer Assessment of Health care Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) Measures –** Each individual question is indexed across the range of national performance for that question. The index scores for two HCAHPS questions (“Definitely Recommend” and “Overall Rating 9-10”) are averaged to produce a single composite score. All available data are used in the calculation of composite scores. Missing data within measure sets are ignored.
* **“Financial Stability INDEX” – Financial Ratios based on CMS Electronic Cost Reports –** Percentile rankings are calculated based on four financial indicators: Leverage, Liquidity, Capital Efficiency and Resource Availability. Higher scores receive higher rankings for all indicators except Leverage, where lower scores receive higher rankings.

About NRHA

The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) is a national nonprofit membership organization with more than 20,000 members. The association’s mission is to provide leadership on rural health issues. NRHA membership consists of a diverse collection of individuals and organizations, all of whom share the common bond of an interest in rural health.

About iVantage Health Analytics

iVantage is a leading advisory and business analytic services company applying Accelerated Healthcare Transformation™ and the VantagePoints™ platform to drive sustained, evidence-based results. The company’s unique combination of technology, content, and expert advisory services accelerates decision making for the new healthcare.

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For more information about the NRHA Top 20 awards breakfast contact Donna Douglas at [ddouglas@NRHArural.org](mailto:ddouglas@NRHArural.org).

For more information about the criteria used, contact Michael Topchik at [mtopchik@ivantagehealth.com](mailto:mtopchik@ivantagehealth.com) or click on the following link: [www.ivantageindex.com](http://www.ivantageindex.com)

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**About the Source Document Study**

Introduction  
In an era of health care reform, providers will face tremendous pressures; for Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs), these pressures will be exacerbated. Specifically, given their cost-based reimbursement, CAHs will be placed under a magnifying glass by public and private payers. Compounding this complex and challenging environment, policymakers will operate under the assumption that if one CAH can achieve excellence in the form of high quality, efficiency, safety and satisfaction, then all CAHs can be held to this same lofty standard.

Given the increased scrutiny, transparency and zero-sum environment, the “Benchmark Performance for Critical Access Hospitals” study seeks to establish the industry’s definitive operational, clinical and financial performance standards for low-volume rural hospitals based on a comprehensive framework.

The Study  
The purpose of this study is to use publically available data to provide a comprehensive comparison of the 1,326 Critical Access Hospitals across a continuum of financial, value-based and market driven performance indicators. The 100 Top CAHs are profiled in this study. The Hospital Strength INDEX™ model aggregates data for 62 indicators organized into nine performance categories. It focuses on a set of CMS value based indicators, augmented by market/competition and financial indicators. It is the first rating system to incorporate market position, competitive intensity and growing healthcare demand. It is also the first rating system modeled on research-based financial ratios most determinant of long-term financial sustainability. This study is unique because it is founded on the belief that a strong hospital/system has the following characteristics in the new health care:

* Low levels of population-related risk
* Dominant market position related to inpatient and outpatient services
* Outstanding quality and safety programs
* Loyal, satisfied patients
* Cost efficient and appropriately priced services
* Strong balance sheet with surplus capital

Review of Data Sources  
In the fall of 2011, iVantage Health Analytics inaugurated the Hospital Strength INDEX™ a comprehensive rating system that compares U.S. general acute-care hospitals across a continuum of financial, value-based and market driven performance indicators. Ratings are based on publicly available data sources, including Medicare Cost Reports, Medicare claims data, Hospital Compare reporting and related sources. In updated studies, iVantage modified the Hospital Strength INDEX™ to include the most recently available data sets and applied a set of refinements to the methodology based on market feedback and access to new data sets.

The Hospital Strength INDEX is designed to provide a comprehensive, objective and straightforward method for comparing hospital performance. The scoring model aggregates hospital-specific data for 62 individual metrics and calculates percentile rankings based on performance in comparison to all hospitals in the study group. Nine primary pillar scores are derived based on the composite scores of their respective components. Aggregate scores across the nine pillars serve as the basis for a single overall rating. The INDEX’s complete methodology is available for download at [www.iVantageINDEX.com](http://www.iVantageINDEX.com)

The various ratings within INDEX are based on publicly available data sources including Medicare Cost Reports,

Medicare claims data, Hospital Compare reporting, indicators from the Agency for Healthcare Research &

Quality, Federal SEC EDGAR filings, as well as other proprietary data and methodologies. In this updated study, iVantage modified the Hospital Strength INDEX to include the most recently available data sets and applied a set of refinements and market share measures to the methodology based on market feedback and access to new data sets required under the new healthcare.

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