About Bluebook Quality Ratings
While hospitals perform many different procedures, most hospitals do not have the same level of quality in every clinical area. The Bluebook quality ratings are designed to provide meaningful quality information that employees can use to determine which facilities will provide the greatest opportunity for the best possible outcome for their specific procedure. Our quality ratings compare each hospital against all other US hospitals measured in a specific clinical area.

Are there significant differences in inpatient quality?
Yes. Much like price variability, there is significant variability in quality across hospitals. It is imperative that the patient understand the idea that quality varies. This ensures that they choose a hospital facility that provides the best outcome (e.g. successful operation, low infection rates, good patient satisfaction).

Because quality may vary at the same hospital for different procedures or clinical categories, Bluebook’s solution displays quality at the clinical category. This is an important differentiator of Bluebook’s quality ratings.

Aren’t all hospitals good at all things?
No, very few hospitals are good at all things. Hospitals use their “brand” to attract patients - it is important that the patient understand the impact of quality for their specific procedure. For example, Cleveland Clinic is in the top 25% for certain cardiac procedures. However, their outcomes for other procedures may not be as good.

What is the data source for the quality information?
The data source incorporates the most recent three years of federal fiscal year claims data from Hospital Quality Alliance (HQA), Hospital Compare All Payer Database for core process of care measures, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Studies (CMS) and Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) Database for patient satisfaction measures.

Is CMS data relevant for people of all ages?
Yes. Medicare (CMS) is a good proxy because it represents 50% of all discharges, many of which are higher risk patients. Data indicates, if a hospital has good quality for a high risk patient, the quality will be similar across all risk levels. Our data source provides the pattern of quality and removes bias associated with age and comorbid conditions.
What are the clinical categories?
There are more than 30 clinical categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Hospital Care</th>
<th>Heart Attack Treatment</th>
<th>Spinal Fusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Medical Care</td>
<td>Heart Failure Treatment</td>
<td>Spinal Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Surgical Care</td>
<td>Hip Fracture</td>
<td>Stroke Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cancer Care</td>
<td>Interventional Coronary Care</td>
<td>Transplant of Bone Marrow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cardiac Care</td>
<td>Joint Replacement</td>
<td>Transplant of Heart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cardiac Surgery (Major)</td>
<td>Major Bowel Procedures</td>
<td>Transplant of Kidney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carotid Artery Surgery</td>
<td>Neurological Care</td>
<td>Transplant of Liver</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coronary Bypass Surgery</td>
<td>Neuro-Surgery (Major)</td>
<td>Transplant of Lung</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gall Bladder Removal</td>
<td>Orthopedic Care</td>
<td>Trauma Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gastrointestinal Care</td>
<td>Orthopedic Surgery (Major)</td>
<td>Vascular Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI Hemorrhage</td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td>Women’s Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Surgery</td>
<td>Pulmonary Care</td>
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How many procedures does this represent on the Bluebook site?
The Bluebook tool currently provides quality ratings for over 200 procedures. Future updates will include quality ratings for more procedures.

Why clinical categories are important v. an overall hospital score:
Accrediting organizations often provide hospitals with a letter grade (A-F) at the overall level, and not at the specific procedure level. This may be misleading to the patient, as the hospital may not perform well for their specific procedure.

Why don’t outpatient facilities have quality ratings?
Sufficient data does not exist for outpatient facilities to create quality ratings.

What factors are included in Bluebook’s quality information?
The Bluebook rating is calculated for each clinical area by combining a hospital’s performance in five areas: Patient Complications, Patient Safety, Mortality, Core Process Metrics and Patient Satisfaction.

Is the Bluebook quality rating a guarantee that I will have a positive outcome?
The quality ratings highlight which facility has a greater probability of having a positive outcome. The quality score is a reliability score relative to every other hospital in the U.S. - it is not a guarantee.

How old is the data used to create the quality rating?
Claims data is released annually for the previous year. A rolling three years of data is used in order to normalize anomalies in the data (smaller segments of data are not statistically relevant).
How are the quality ratings displayed:

- A Green Check-Plus rating indicates that the hospital is performing among the top 25% of all US hospitals for the specific procedure.
- A Yellow Check indicates that the hospital is among the lowest performing 25% of all US hospitals.
- A Red Check-Minus indicates that the hospital is among the middle 50% of all hospitals.

What other information is available regarding the facility?
Within the facility detail page, we provide quality details, quality definition, and a list of practicing physicians with demographic information:

Will every hospital have a quality rating for every procedure?
No - not every hospital performs every procedure.

Bluebook’s quality information is a better source for the following reasons:
- Quality ratings are provided at the clinical category
- Data is not self-reported
- Data is statistically relevant and risk adjusted
- Includes all non-federal hospitals
- Bluebook’s rating is multi-dimensional and includes five areas: Patient Complications, Patient Safety, Mortality, Core Process Metrics and Patient Satisfaction
- Ratings are displayed in an easy color coded format

Does Healthcare Bluebook include cost rating information along with quality ratings?
Yes. Bluebook’s solution currently includes cost ratings for a growing number of inpatient procedures that have quality ratings.