Some shuffling in the top 50 ranks

UCH Repeats as Tops in Colorado in U.S. News Rankings

For University of Colorado Hospital, the *U.S. News Best Hospitals* 2013-2014 rankings, released July 16, has some of the old and some of the new.

Some of the old news really never gets old. This is the 19th consecutive year the hospital has been ranked among the nation’s top hospitals in the *U.S. News* report. For a second consecutive year, the popular report ranks UCH as the top hospital in the Denver metro area and the state of Colorado.

“Every day our physicians, nurses and staff come to work with the goal of providing the highest quality and safest care,” said UCH CEO John Harney. “Our mission is to improve the lives of our patients in both big and small ways, and this ranking is a great recognition of that constant work to be the best.”

In addition, five specialties at UCH rank among the top 50 in the nation (see box), the same number as last year.

What’s new is in the list of the hospital’s top-ranked specialties. Two that were ranked as “high performers” in 2012 cracked the top 50 this year: orthopedics and neurology/neurosurgery. However, two others that were on the top 50 list last year, rheumatology and diabetes/endocrinology, slipped to the high performers ranks this year.

The *U.S. News Best Hospitals* rankings, now in its 24th year, examines nearly 5,000 hospitals across the nation, including 30 in the Denver metro area, in 16 adult specialties.

In 12 of the 16 specialty categories, *U.S. News* considers reputation as well as government data on patient survival, patient safety, and “care-related factors,” such as nursing and patient services. In four others – ophthalmology, psychiatry, rehabilitation, and rheumatology – the report ranks hospitals solely on reputation as determined by a physician survey.

This year, the rankings methodology includes two changes, described by the publication as “adjustments.” One excludes from the rankings calculations patients who were admitted to the hospital with conditions that made them “susceptible to injury.” The idea is to avoid penalizing hospitals who treat patients with conditions like pneumonia that are present on admission.

The other change excludes spinal fusion cases from the Neurology/Neurosurgery rankings calculations. They are now included only in the Orthopedics category.

Two other UCH hospitals were also ranked highly. *U.S. News* recognized Poudre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins as #4 in the state and Medical Center of the Rockies in Loveland as #7 in Colorado.

“As the *U.S. News* ranking shows, all our locations focus on quality and on bringing health — not just health care — to our patients,” said UCH CEO Bruce Schroffel.

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In 2012, University HealthSystem Consortium, the organization of academic medical centers, ranked UCH number one in quality for the second consecutive year. That ranking was based solely on quality, safety and efficiency data.

UCH is nationally ranked by U.S. News in five specialties:

» Pulmonology (2nd)
» Cancer (23rd)
» Orthopedics (28th)
» Nephrology (32nd)
» Neurology and Neurosurgery (46th)

U.S. News recognizes UCH in nine other high-performing specialties:

» Cardiology & Heart Surgery
» Diabetes & Endocrinology
» Ear, Nose & Throat
» Gastroenterology & GI Surgery
» Geriatrics
» Gynecology
» Rehabilitation
» Rheumatology
» Urology

For the complete national, state and metro-area rankings, go to http://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals.