

Rating the Raters – Strengths and Weaknesses Assessment of the Four Public Hospital Quality Rating Systems

The comments in the table below reflect the discussion that the Rating-the-Raters group had about each rating system. These comments for each rating system were provided to the leaders of that rating system to solicit feedback.

Usability

(CMS) Hospital Compare Overall Star Ratings	Healthgrades Top Hospitals	USNWR (U.S. News & World Report) Best Hospitals	Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade and Leapfrog Top Hospitals
Pro			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User friendly • Easy to find a hospital • Allows for comparisons of multiple hospitals • Website indicates how current data are • Uses graphical displays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to find a hospital • Ratings searchable based on specific procedures and conditions • Video explaining what stars mean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients can readily identify which procedure /specialty-specific ranking are most applicable to their clinical circumstance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to use • Color coding is helpful • Multiple ways to sort and compare hospitals • Grade is displayed prominently and is very apparent to user • Has a “how to use Leapfrog hospital Safety Grade” video tool posted to website • Top Hospitals ratings breaks up hospitals’ rankings by hospital type
Con			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not easy to compare hospitals • Uses 3 options only on a 5-star scale (1, 3, 5) • Each measure category is displayed differently (e.g., Stars, percentage better/average/worse, or overall “patient safety” score) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comparison tool; difficult to compare hospitals • A lot of information, many clicks needed • Underlying hospital data not shown in user-friendly format • Detailed display tables were helpful to understanding and were removed in recent iteration • Filled with distracting hospital advertisements • Only summary data (“Average,” “Good,” “Very High,” “Best”) provided on public website. Would prefer layering of information for those interested in more detail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No feature to navigate to detailed measure scores from list of Top Hospitals • Does not rank hospitals within state

Source: The Authors. Details of the rating process are available at www.RatingTheRaters.org

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