HOW DOES YOUR DOCTOR COMpare?
CONSUMER REPORTS RATES PHYSICIAN GROUPS IN WISCONSIN

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation effort helps people use objective information on the quality of care delivered at local primary care practices

MIDDLETOWN, WI—New ratings published in Consumer Reports magazine give consumers in Wisconsin a rare window into how their doctors compare. The ratings focus on how well doctors provide evidence-based care for patients with high blood pressure and diabetes, and how often doctors provide the right screening tests for colon cancer.

Known as The Doctor Project, the effort is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and was led in Wisconsin by the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality (WCHQ), a nationally recognized multi-stakeholder consortium of organizations working to improve the health and increase health care value in the state. Additional support was provided by MN Community Measurement, another national leader in reporting information on the quality of care provided by doctors, medical practices, and hospitals.

“It is surprisingly difficult for a patient with diabetes to find out which doctors provide the best diabetes care,” said Susan Mende, BSN, MPH, senior program officer at RWJF. “These ratings provide a starting point for patients to talk with their doctor about the right care for their condition, and potentially choose a specific practice that provides high-quality care.”

WCHQ worked with physician groups to collect and report data from more than 250 medical clinics, representing about 60 percent of the physicians in the state. The medical groups participate voluntarily, and almost half of the practices earned top scores for at least two of the three measures; 38 clinics received top scores in all three. Overall, clinics in Wisconsin score higher than the national average.

“We have been working in Wisconsin for more than a decade to provide both consumers and clinicians with objective information about the quality of care provided at local medical practices,” said Chris Queram, president and CEO of the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality. “Our members are committed to transparency and quality improvement. Making this information available is an important step toward improving the care and overall health of people in our area.”

The doctor ratings are part of the May issue of Consumer Reports, available online at ConsumerReports.org and on newsstands and wherever magazines are sold.
“The physician group ratings are part of a broader effort by Consumer Reports to give consumers as much meaningful data as possible so they can make smart decisions,” said Doris Peter, PhD, director of the Consumer Reports Health Ratings Center. "Given the importance of our health care decisions—both in terms of their effect on our health and our pocketbooks—we need to bring more transparency and accountability to health care.”

Eight community-based health care organizations—representing California, Massachusetts, Maine, Minnesota, Washington, Wisconsin, and the greater Columbus, Ohio, and Detroit, Mich. areas—have agreed to publish quality ratings of physician groups. To identify objective measures to assess quality of care, the community organizations worked with local practices and physicians.

The Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality worked with local practices and physicians over many months to identify objective measures to assess quality of care. The data help providers see what is working and where there are opportunities for improvement.

In addition to Consumer Reports magazine, the ratings will be available at www.wchq.org for no charge.

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**About the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality**
Founded in 2003, the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality (WCHQ) is a voluntary, non-profit consortium of 39 organizations committed to using the public reporting of comparative measures of performance to catalyze improvements in the quality and affordability of healthcare in our state. To view our reports or to find out more about WCHQ, please visit our website www.wchq.org

**About Consumer Reports**
Consumer Reports is the world’s largest and most trusted nonprofit, consumer organization working to improve the lives of consumers by driving marketplace change. Founded in 1936, Consumer Reports has achieved substantial gains for consumers on health reform, food and product safety, financial reform, and other issues. The organization has advanced important policies to cut hospital-acquired infections, prohibit predatory lending practices and combat dangerous toxins in food. Consumer Reports tests and rates thousands of products and services in its 50-plus labs, state-of-the-art auto test center and consumer research center. Consumers Union, a division of Consumer Reports, works for pro-consumer laws and regulations in Washington, D.C., the states, and in the marketplace. With more than eight million subscribers to its flagship magazine, website and other publications, Consumer Reports accepts no advertising, payment or other support from the companies whose products it evaluates.

**About MN Community Measurement**
MN Community Measurement is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving health by publicly reporting health care information. A trusted source of health care data and public reporting on quality, cost and patient experience since 2003, MNCM works with medical groups, health plans, employers, consumers and state agencies to spur quality improvement, reduce health care costs and maximize value. Learn more at MNCM.org.

**About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**
For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. We are working with others to build a national Culture of Health enabling everyone in America to live longer, healthier lives. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org. Follow the Foundation on Twitter at www.rwjf.org/twitter or on Facebook at www.rwjf.org/facebook.