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## **Earl K. Long Medical Center Receives National Award for Outstanding Patient Satisfaction**

**Baton Rouge (January 15, 2009)** – Earl K. Long Medical Center (EKLMC) has received the 2009 Outstanding Patient Experience Award from HealthGrades, the nation's leading independent healthcare ratings organization, for ranking in the top 15 percent nationally for exemplary service to patients.

In fact, EKLMC far exceeded the top 15 percent; its percentile ranking was 3.32, placing it among the top four percent in the nation.

“Patient-centered care is always foremost both in our philosophy and in our daily practice of health care,” said Dr. Kathy Viator, acting EKLMC hospital administrator. “This day-to-day delivery of quality health care translates into patients who are highly satisfied with their experience at our hospital.”

The ratings are based on patient satisfaction results from *The Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems* (HCAHPS) survey that hospital patients provided as part of a new federal initiative to increase public reporting of hospital performance. The survey includes 27 questions related to physician and nurse communication, responsiveness, hospital cleanliness and noise levels, medication information, and postdischarge care instructions. It is the first national, standardized, publicly reported survey of patients' perspectives of hospital care. HCAHPS is an initiative of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

To identify the top-performing hospitals, HealthGrades analyzed survey results for the 2,592 hospitals nationwide that participated in the HCAHPS program to determine which hospitals scored highest on the surveys. Hospitals had to meet bed size, survey response size, and clinical-quality thresholds in order to be rated. . HealthGrades recognized 271 hospitals within the top 15 percent.

Information on award recipients, the ratings methodology, and HealthGrades is available, free to the public, at <http://www.healthgrades.com>.

“This truly is a distinction generated by patients for patients,” said HealthGrades Executive Vice President Sarah Loughran. “HealthGrades Outstanding Patient Experience Award recognizes those hospitals that deliver a level of service most highly rated by patients.”

HealthGrades is providing this award to help consumers choose the best hospital for

themselves and their loved ones. Patients want to know about hospitals' patient experience track records. A recent McKinsey study found that 41% of commercially insured patients consider patient experience measures to be an important factor in choosing a hospital.

In a survey of 868 HealthGrades.com visitors, 84% said that if a hospital received a HealthGrades Outstanding Patient Experience Award it would increase their interest in choosing that hospital.

Health Grades, Inc. (Nasdaq: [HGRD - News](#)) is the leading independent healthcare ratings organization, providing quality ratings, profiles and cost information on the nation's hospitals, physicians, nursing homes and prescription drugs. Millions of patients and many of the nation's largest employers, health plans and hospitals rely on HealthGrades' quality ratings, advisory services and decision-support resources. The HealthGrades Network of Web sites, including HealthGrades.com and WrongDiagnosis.com, is a top-ten health property according to ComScore and is the Internet's leading destination for patients choosing providers.

The LSU Health System - Health Care Services Division is one of the largest public health care delivery systems in the country. It has over 31,000 admissions, 180,000 patient days, 981,000 outpatient visits, and over 270,000 emergency department visits. Each year 1100 residents and fellows from the LSU and Tulane Schools of Medicine and Ochsner Health System and 2,200 nurses and allied health students from many colleges and universities are trained in LSU facilities.

LSU is the largest single provider of uncompensated inpatient care in Louisiana. LSU HCSD hospitals have an economic impact of over \$1.4 billion in asset business activity, \$568 million in personal earnings, and generate over 12,000 jobs.

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