

# Hospitals hurting on scores

**BMC and Meadowlands near bottom in 2 areas**

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A performance report released yesterday revealed weaknesses in care at some of Hudson County's six hospitals last year.

Bayonne Medical Center had the state's second worst score in "surgical care improvement" - a measure of how well hospitals prevent infections and blood clots in surgical patients - and was third worst in treating pneumonia, according to the study by the state Department of Health and Senior Services.

Just 64 percent of patients received proper care before and after surgery, and 86 percent were treated adequately for pneumonia, the report said. BMC officials did not return phone calls seeking comment yesterday.

The state rates acute care hospitals each year, focusing on surgical care and treatment for pneumonia and heart ailments because they account for a large number of hospitalizations and deaths.

Meadowlands Hospital Medical Center in Secaucus also did poorly on surgical care, with just 67 percent of patients receiving adequate care, while its score of 88 for treating heart attacks was the fourth lowest in New Jersey.

Hospital spokesman John McKeegan said Meadowlands has been doing an "extensive review of its procedures" to improve its performance, and is already seeing results.

"That's not where the hospital is at this year," he said, referring to the numbers. "What everyone really wants to see is overall daily improvement in these types of measures."

Hoboken University Medical Center saw its rating in treating heart failure drop to 77 percent, the fourth lowest in the state, and had worse scores than the previous year in the other three categories as well.

"Where we did poorly was the paperwork part, not the treatment part," said Assemblywoman Joan Quigley, spokeswoman for HUMC. "We got people well, then didn't give them very specific instructions on how to care for themselves when they got home."

She said the hospital has already addressed the problem by making discharge papers more thorough, and has also hired a consultant to monitor performance in all categories on a weekly basis.

Christ Hospital improved in all areas over last year. CEO Peter Kelly credited a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, designed to reduce disparities in treatment for minorities, for a big jump in the hospital's heart failure treatment score from 76 to 89 percent.

Palisades Medical Center in North Bergen was one of six hospitals statewide with a perfect score in treating heart failure.