



For Immediate Release  
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### **SRMC Receives UNISON Gold Star Award**

WAYNESBURG – Unison Health Care, a leading public sector health care plan, recently named Southwest Regional Medical Center as a Gold Star Provider. The designation was made as a result of Southwest Regional’s voluntary participation in Unison Health Care’s Hospital Reduction of Infection Program, which evaluates participating hospitals’ infection control rates and policies.

In order for Southwest Regional to be considered for the Gold Star award, the hospital had to meet the basic criteria, which included:

- Admitting a minimum of 100 members during the measurement period.
- Demonstrating provision of effective care.

Effective care is measured by the percentage decrease of hospital-acquired infections as documented annually in the Pennsylvania Health Cost Containment Council Report. Hospitals that achieved a five percent reduction in infection rates per thousand cases as identified in PHC4 will meet this measure and be designated as a Gold Star recipient.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a hospital-acquired infection is a localized or systemic condition that a) results from adverse reaction to the presence of an infectious agent(s) or its toxin(s) and b) was not present or incubating at the time of admission to the hospital.

Southwest Regional achieved above the five percent rate, earning the Gold Star award. “We have measures in place that are working to reduce hospital-acquired infections,” said Infection Control Nurse Laura Walker. “We keep our infection rates down through continuing staff education and compliance with infection control standards.” According to Walker, SRMC saw a 50 percent reduction in hospital-acquired infections over the past year. Statistics from the study used to award the Gold Star were from July 2006 through June 2007.

“Unison Health Plan takes an active role in the quality achievements of our member hospitals and physicians,” said Jennifer Kessler, president of Americhoice/Unison Health Plan of Pennsylvania. “When we identify hospitals such as Southwest Regional Medical Center who exceed quality indicators in specific clinical areas, we think it’s very important to recognize them for their efforts in setting their facilities apart from others.”

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“I am so proud of our team in helping us to achieve this designation,” shared Cindy Cowie, Chief Executive Officer. “We continue to raise the bar on quality healthcare for our community.”

This award was presented to the hospital just months after Southwest Regional announced the Gold Seal of Approval from The Joint Commission.

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