How Are Local Hospitals Handling Heart Health?

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RICHMOND (WRIC) - A new report looks at all of them in Virginia -- and there are some standouts.

Virginia Health Information looked at how many people die from cardiac problems at each one hospital.

VHI hopes everyone uses the report to come up with a heart health plan because you may not have time to decide in the heat of the moment.

Andrea Woie is the picture of health today, but she'll never forget that moment two years ago when, at age 32, she made a second trip to the hospital within a week for unexplained chest and back pain.

"That's when the ER doctor came in and said you're not going to believe it but your blood work is indicating you've had a heart attack," she says. "Usually when people have blockages especially as severe as mine was, you don't make it through it."

VHI Executive Director Michael Lundberg says the new cardiac care report found stories like Woie's are becoming more common.

"We've seen a decline in mortality rates for heart attack over many, many years and Virginia hospitals are really focused on that."

He hopes patients use the information to start a conversation with their doctors and decide where they can get the best care for their individual needs.

There's been progress, but heart disease is still a top killer of men and women in Virginia and being proactive can be lifesaving.

"If you're still not feeling right, something's still not right, no doctor, no healthcare provider is going to turn you away for trying to take care of yourself."

Scores are varied across the commonwealth but taking a look at hospitals in and around Richmond, the news is pretty good.

Out of three possible hearts, Lundberg says most earned two for death and readmissions due to heart conditions. That's average, where they're expected to be.

However, Bon Secours Memorial Regional earned the best possible score of three hearts for low readmissions.

"I know I speak for all of my colleagues at Bon Secours Heart & Vascular Institute that we are honored to be recognized by Virginia Health Information with a perfect of score of three hearts," said Marc R. Katz, M.D., chief medical officer of Bon Secours Heart & Vascular Institute and head of the Minimally Invasive Surgery Program at Bon Secours Richmond Health System. "Achieving the highest standards of excellence in medical outcomes and patient care is what we strive for daily, in all of our facilities, so it is rewarding for Memorial Regional Medical Center to be recognized in this way."

VCU Medical Center earned one heart for a high re-admission rate.

"VCU Medical Center is committed to quality and safety," says Ron Clark, M.D., Chief Medical Officer. "As the region's center for heart transplant, total artificial heart and advanced heart failure, we are committed to caring for patients with advanced, end-stage heart disease at the VCU Pauley Heart Center. We are focused on optimizing the health and improving the health care for the region, including reducing readmissions, by engaging patients, their families, and community partners. While these data are risk adjusted, risk models do not adequately adjust for the sickest patients, such as those at VCU Medical Center."

To read the full Virginia Health Information Cardiac Care report click here:
vhi.org/cardiac_compare.asp

8News

15 New Stores, Renovations Coming to Short Pump Town Center

Updated: Feb 27, 2014 10:29 AM EST
HENRICO (WRIC) - Short Pump Town Center announced Thursday the addition of 15 new retailers and restaurants and a multimillion-dollar renovation. Over the next six to nine months, shoppers will see new

Cold, Windy Thursday Ahead ▶

Updated: Feb 27, 2014 7:15 AM EST
RICHMOND (WRIC)—The ABC 8 News viewing area can expect a windy Thursday, frigid Friday and mild weekend ahead of possible rain and snow next week. Mainly sunny skies will be over the region Thursday, but

Va. Man Found in S.C. with Kidnapped Mom in His Trunk

Updated: Feb 27, 2014 10:36 AM EST
SANTEE, S.C. (AP) - South Carolina troopers say they have taken a Virginia man into custody after finding his mother in the trunk of his car at a rest