



Virginia Health Information: "From Numbers to Knowledge"

By [lauren davis](#) on January 16, 2015

As consumers of health care, we face a lot of unknowns. How much will care cost? What hospital or doctor has experience with our conditions? How long will I be in the hospital? What kind of "customer service" can I expect?

Virginia Health Information (VHI) is an organization whose aim is to help answer some of those unknowns by moving "from numbers to knowledge." VHI's mission is "To create and disseminate health care information; To promote informed decision making by Virginia consumers and purchasers, and To enhance the quality of health care delivery." In pursuit of its mission, VHI gathers data about Virginia hospitals, nursing homes, long term care facilities, physicians, and health insurance and then tries to organize that data so that the rest of us can use it in a meaningful way to make health care decisions.

For instance, VHI recently released its [2013 Service Line Reports](#). Using VHI's website, you can select the type of service in which you are interested (e.g. burns, cardiology, dental, dermatology, endocrinology, surgery, gastroenterology, general medicine, gynecology, hematology, infectious disease, neonatology, nephrology, neurology, newborn, obstetrics/delivery, oncology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, otolaryngology, plastic surgery, psychiatry, pulmonary, rehabilitation, rheumatology, transplants, trauma, urology, vascular). Then you can either look for all information across the state or limit it by region and/or hospital. You can see which hospitals provide which services and the number of cases done in the last year.

You can also look at individual hospitals to learn more. For instance, [Carilion Medical Center](#) (often referred to as Carilion Clinic) provides a significant amount of health care to citizens in Roanoke, the New River Valley, and the Southwest Virginia region more generally. VHI's website compiles general information about Carilion Medical Center (like its number of beds, tax status, and designation as a Level 1 Trauma Center) as well as data about its efficiency, patient satisfaction levels, financial information, and outcomes with specific types of services like obstetrics and cardiology.

For individual cardiologists and ob/gyns, you can look up [how they performed](#) compared to expected outcomes, such as cesarean (c-section) rates, length of stays, and average charges.

If you're interested in efficiency and productivity of different facilities, the [2014 Industry Report](#) is also available. The hospitals with the highest overall efficiency and productivity rankings according to the 2014 Industry Report include:

- Virginia Hospital Center
- Bon Secours Memorial Regional Medical Center
- Riverside Walter Reed Hospital
- Novant Health Prince William Medical Center
- Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital
- LewisGale Hospital Montgomery
- Reston Hospital Center
- Sentara Leigh Hospital
- Wellmont Mountain View Regional Medical Center.

Of [hospitals in Southwest Virginia](#), 8 had 2014 charity care percentages above 20%: Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital, Carilion Tazewell Community Hospital, Clinch Valley Medical Center, Danville Regional Medical Center, LewisGale Hospital Montgomery, Memorial Hospital of Martinsville & Henry County, and Wythe County Community Hospital.

The [2014 Industry Report on Southwestern Virginia Nursing Facilities](#) shows that Avante

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Memorial Hospital of Martinsville & Henry County, and Wayne County Community Hospital.

The [2014 Industry Report on Southwestern Virginia Nursing Facilities](#) shows that Avante at Roanoke, Blue Ridge Nursing Center of Martinsville & Henry County, Brian Center Nursing Care – Fincastle, Edgemont Center, Golden Living Center – Alleghany, Golden Living Center – Martinsville, Heritage Hall – Clintwood, and Riverview Nursing Home have among the highest Medicaid participation rates. The median amount paid per patient per day for Southwestern Virginia Nursing facilities was \$146. Some, like Blue Ridge Nursing Center of Martinsville & Henry County and Valley Health Care Center, collected only 2/3 of that, at around \$100 per day.

VHI provides all sorts of additional information about hospitals and physicians across Virginia.

While this sort of information does not create complete transparency for patients and will not prevent all negligence and medical malpractice, it can go a long way toward helping us become more informed consumers of health care in Virginia.



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