

PEBB

Go Shopping for Better, Safer Hospital Care

Are you or a loved one going into a hospital soon? You may want to do some shopping first – not for a pair of slippers, but for the hospital itself.

Here are two reasons to “shop” for a hospital:

1. The quality and safety of care they provide may vary widely.
2. You can choose a hospital based on quality and safety ratings.

Taking the Quality Leap

Beginning in 2006, the Board asked its medical plans to require that

their hospitals report to the public through the Leapfrog Group’s online hospital assessment.

Leapfrog reports how far along hospitals are in taking four “leaps” that mean higher quality and safety based on scientific evidence:

1. Use of computers to order medicines, tests and procedures
2. Intensive care units staffed by trained “intensivists”
3. Referring patients for high-risk procedures to hospitals that do more of those procedures with good outcomes.

4. Putting processes in place to cut down on preventable medical mistakes.

Rural hospitals are expected to report only on the third and fourth leap.

The Leapfrog Web site, updated monthly, displays the status of each hospital’s leaps in a user-friendly format at www.leapfroggroup.org.

(Continued on page 2)

The Leapfrog Group includes most Fortune 500 companies, along with the nation’s largest healthcare purchasing groups. The Oregon Coalition of Health Care Purchasers, which includes PEBB, Intel, PGE and other large healthcare purchasers, urges all Oregon hospitals to participate in Leapfrog.

Oregon Hospitals that Report Through Leapfrog (as of March 6, 2007)

City	Hospital
Albany	Samaritan Albany General Hospital
Clackamas	Kaiser Sunnyside Medical Center
Corvallis	Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center
Gresham	Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center
Lebanon	Mid Valley Healthcare/Lebanon
Lincoln City	Samaritan North Lincoln Hospital
Milwaukie	Providence Milwaukie Hospital
Newberg	Providence Newberg Medical Center
Newport	Samaritan Pacific Communities Hospital
Portland	Adventist Medical Center
Portland	Legacy Emanuel Hospital & Health Center
Portland	Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital & Medical Center
Portland	Oregon Health & Science University Hospitals & Clinics
Portland	Providence Portland Medical Center
Portland	Providence St Vincent Medical Center
Springfield	McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center
Tualatin	Legacy Meridian Park Hospital

Inside this issue

Commission Releases	
First Report	2
Goal: Save Five Million Lives	2
The Eyes Have It	3
It’s Tax Time	5
Employment Department Makes Healthy Choices Easier	6

Go Shopping for Better Care

(Continued from page 1)

Why Isn't My Hospital on the Leapfrog List?

If you don't see your hospital listed here, it chose not to report. For example, three of the Oregon hospitals that serve the largest number of PEBB members do not report through Leapfrog:

- Salem Hospital, Salem
- Sacred Heart Hospital, Eugene
- Saint Charles Medical Center, Bend.

These hospitals may participate in other quality programs. But Leapfrog is the only national program that meets all the Board's goals for:

- Consumer-friendly format that makes reports easier to understand
- Frequent updates that show hospital progress
- Reports that cover patient-safety as well as quality-of-care guidelines
- Easily available reports to the general public.

From the Board Chair

"Public reporting on quality and safety leads to improvements across the entire healthcare spectrum. The Board congratulates Oregon hospitals that have chosen to report through Leapfrog. But we are disappointed that not all the state's hospitals participate in this important effort. Our members account for a significant portion of their patient volume and claims. They deserve to know if – and how – these hospitals follow widely accepted quality-of-care and patient-safety guidelines."

—*Diane Lovell, Chair, Public Employees' Benefit Board*

Note: Not all hospitals may be covered at a lower coinsurance level in your plan. Be sure to compare your hospital selections with your coverage level.

Goal: Save Five Million Lives

Last year, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement set a goal of saving 500,000 lives through better hospital safety in U.S. hospitals. That goal jumped to a goal of five million lives this year.

Most Oregon hospitals have signed on. The initiative helps them focus in on 12 common-sense practices to prevent infections, skin ulcers and medication mix-ups, among others.

All Samaritan Select hospitals participate. Sarah Place RN, BSN, MBA, Samaritan Director of Quality and Patient Safety, says, "The campaign has moved quality and safety efforts to the forefront and captured the attention of our boards. We have moved new resources into areas where we can improve care and outcomes for our patients."

Spurred on by the campaign, Samaritan hospitals have:

- Set up rapid response teams to prevent patient emergencies
- Put standards of care in place for heart attack and pneumonia patients
- Added steps to prevent infections
- Revamped systems so patients know more about their medications on discharge.

Place adds, "Changing an organization's basic structure can be hard. But, our staff and physicians have been enthusiastic about making changes. They support recommendations from the campaign."

Safety Commission Releases Report

The state's Patient Safety Commission reports on medical errors in Oregon hospitals and works with them to improve patient safety. The commission released its first draft report in January.

Commission Administrator Jim Dameron says, "This draft report provides another important piece of evidence that Oregon hospitals are truly engaged in the process of improving patient safety."

Through the commission, all the state's major hospitals voluntarily report what are called adverse events. These range from falls, infections and bedsores, to objects left in patients during surgery.

From May through December 2006, hospitals reported 53 events. Some caused little harm, but 18 resulted in death.

Read the draft summary: www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/pscommission.

THE EYES HAVE IT

(Continued from page 3)

Diabetes and Eye Care

People with diabetes are 25 times more likely to go blind than people without the disease. It is the leading cause of blindness among adults in the U.S.

Diabetes harms the body's blood vessels – including those in the eye. Over time, lack of blood to the eye can cause blurred vision and blindness.

Diabetes can also result in cataracts, which also reduce vision. Cataracts can be a result of age, but they happen more often and earlier in people who have diabetes.

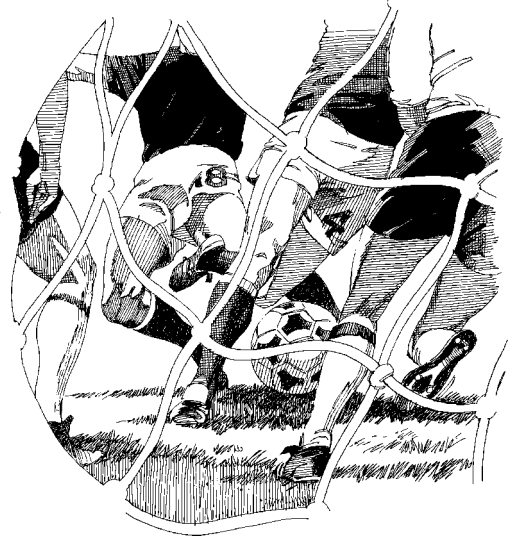
If you have diabetes, make sure you have your eyes examined regularly. It could save your sight.

Play Hard, but Protect Your Eyes

More than 40,000 people a year suffer eye injuries while playing sports. Yet almost all sports-related eye injuries can be prevented. Whatever your game, whatever your age, you need to protect your eyes.

Regular glasses don't provide enough protection. So take the following steps to avoid sports eye injuries:

- Wear proper safety goggles (lensed polycarbonate protectors) for racquet sports and basketball.
- Use batting helmets with polycarbonate face shields for youth baseball.
- Use helmets and face shields approved by the U.S. Amateur Hockey Association when playing hockey.



Talk to your kids about these options. Point out that their sports heroes protect their eyes, and they should, too.

Public Employees' Benefit Board

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Public Meetings

The Benefit Board meets monthly. For meeting information, please check the Meetings section of the PEBB Web site: oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB/meetings.shtml.

Benefit HOT TOPICS

It's Tax Time

We All Follow the Rules

It's tax time again. Just as you have to comply with federal tax laws, so does PEBB.

PEBB's program is a Cafeteria Plan; it allows employees choice in types and/or levels of benefits funded with untaxed dollars. To qualify, PEBB must follow IRS regulations on dependent children. Following is a summary of PEBB's definition of "dependent child."

A dependent child must be either:

- Your biological or adopted child, or a child placed for adoption with you or your spouse or domestic partner
- Your legal ward by court decree; a dependent by Affidavit of Dependency; or under your or your spouse's or domestic partner's legal guardianship.

The child:

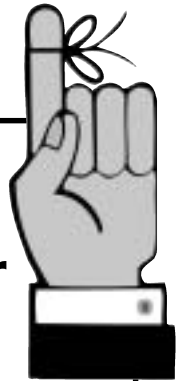
- May not be married or have a domestic partner
- May not qualify as a dependent under IRS rules for anyone other than you
- May be treated as a dependent for the purpose of obtaining healthcare coverage by both parents if you are divorced or legally separated.

A dependent child must also meet one of the following criteria. The child:

- Is under the age of 19 at the end of the calendar year
- Is age 19 to 24 and meets the IRS definition of a dependent child attending school full time (this excludes foreign students)
- Is age 19 to 24 and the eligible member provides or expects to provide more than half the child's support for the year, and the child lives in the eligible member's home for at least six months of the year
- Is age 19 to 24 and is incapable of self-sustaining employment because of a developmental disability, mental illness or physical disability
- Is age 24 or older and is incapable of self-sustaining employment because of a developmental disability, mental illness or physical disability that existed before the child attained age 24. The child must have had continuous individual or group medical coverage prior to attaining age 24 and until the PEBB effective coverage date.

If you are in doubt about your child's status, contact your agency or PEBB.

One to Remember



While you're thinking about taxes and dependents, take a minute to check your dependent information in your benefits record. Log in at <https://pebb.benefits.oregon.gov/members> and select "View my dependents information." To correct or add information for any listed dependent or to add a new dependent, you must complete and submit a Medical and Dental Update form, available online at www.oregon.gov/das/pebb/forms.shtml.

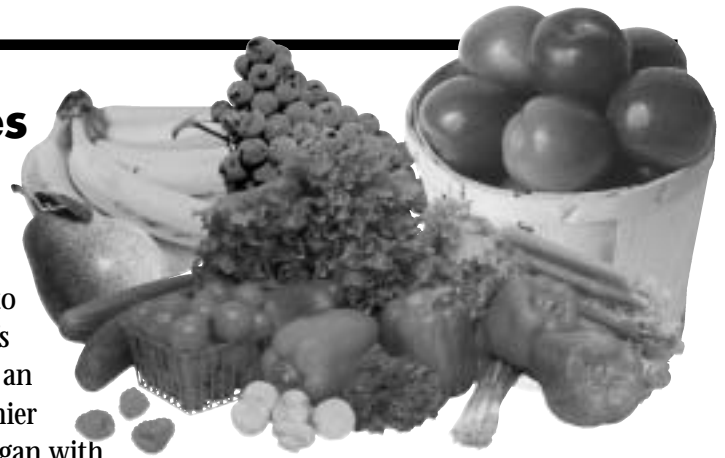
Employment Department Makes Healthy Choices Easier

Like most changes in workplace culture, a sustained focus on employee health can come long and hard. For the Employment Department's HealthWorks committee, events made it surprisingly quick and smooth to make healthier food an easier choice for the 500 employees in the department's central office in Salem.

Employment joined the state's Healthy Worksites Initiative pilot project just a few months ago. They started a wellness "buzz" in their building with a focus on physical activity. For example, new posters promote using stairs rather than elevators.

When their on-site food vendor decided to close, the department's facilities manager saw an opportunity for healthier food choices. Talks began with a new vendor, who seemed happy to provide a tasty **and** healthy array of breakfast, lunch and snack options.

The new vendor opened the café on March 5. The deli-style menu offers low-fat, high-nutrition options – nothing deep-fried. The HealthWorks committee promotes new menus throughout the building. And *voila*, it's easier for employees to make healthier food choices at work.



"The thing that excites me the most about this is that the facilities manager came up with the idea on her own and approached me," says committee chairman and communications manager Tom Fuller. "Now HealthWorks can achieve our goal of encouraging healthy eating while also supporting a business in our building. We look forward to more creative ways of changing the culture and health of our staff."

PEBB and the Public Health Division of the Department of Human Services sponsor and support the Healthy Worksites Initiative pilot program. Currently, 13 state agencies participate. Their wellness committees focus on sustainable, best practices that make the healthy choice the easy choice for state employees.

PEBB Resources

PEBB

www.oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB
Salem: (503) 373-1102
Statewide: (800) 788-0520

BenefitHelp Solutions

(FSA Administrator)
www.benefithelpsolutions.com
(800) 556-2230

Kaiser Permanente

(Medical & Dental Plans)
<http://my.kp.org/nw/pebb>
Portland: (503) 813-2000
Outside Portland: (800) 813-2000
TTY: (800) 735-2900

The ODS Companies

(Dental Plans)
www.odscompanies.com/pebb
Portland: (503) 265-5680
Outside Portland (877) 277-7280

Providence Choice

(Medical Plan)
www.providence.org/resources/pebb
Portland: (503) 574-6620
Outside Portland: (800) 423-9470

Regence BlueCross BlueShield

(Medical Plans)
www.or.regence.com/pebb
Portland: (503) 220-3849
Outside Portland: (800) 826-9813

Samaritan Select

(Medical Plans)
www.samaritanselect.com
Corvallis area: (541) 768-6900
Outside Corvallis area: (800) 569-4616

The Standard Insurance Company

(Life & Disability Plans)
www.standard.com
Life Benefits (800) 242-1888
Disability Benefits (800) 842-1707

VSP

(Routine Vision Services except Kaiser)
www.vsp.com
(800) 877-7195

Willamette Dental

(Dental Plan)
www.willamettedental.com
Portland: (503) 644-6444, Option 8
Statewide: (800) 460-7644, Option 8

UnumProvident

(Long Term Care Plan)
www.unumprovident.com/enroll/pebb
(800) 227-4165

PEBB Mission

To provide a high quality plan of health and other benefits that are affordable to both the employee and the state.