New Mexico Hospital Association
Always There, Ready to Care.

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Lincoln County Medical Center Awarded Honor in Hospital Quality
Hospital's program reduces patients' emergency room waiting time and length of hospital stay

Albuquerque, N.M. – October 8, 2020 – Lincoln County Medical Center in Ruidoso, N.M., has earned the Quest for Excellence Critical Access-Rural Hospital Award, the New Mexico Hospital Association's (NMHA's) premier honor for New Mexico's rural hospitals. The hospital was honored for a project that used nationally recognized patient quality data to significantly reduce the wait times from emergency departments to inpatient admission. The award was presented in a ceremony at the 75th NMH*All Together* Annual Meeting of the NMHA this year brought to healthcare stakeholders through a virtual event platform.

Todd Oberheu, Lincoln County Medical Center Hospital Chief Executive accepted the award from John Harris, CEO of Memorial Medical Center and NMHA board of directors' chair. At all times, commitment to quality and patient safety is central to the mission of NMHA member hospitals, shared Harris.

Lincoln County Medical Center is one of just three New Mexico hospitals to earn the competitive award for work conducted between August 2019-August 2020. By instituting a warm handoff toolkit, in 2020, the hospital admitted an average of 66% of patients within 30 minutes of bed assignment, which is up from 37% in 2019. Decreasing admission wait times also resulted in reducing patients' length of stay from over 3.5 days to three days.

"The hospital's comprehensive plan put into action has made Lincoln County Medical Center a leader in the state and nation in fostering patient quality and access to services," said Troy Clark, NMHA president and CEO.

It takes a team representing multiple disciplines to make patient quality and safety gains a reality. The Lincoln County Medical Center team includes the following hospital staff: Jacqui Lawrence, RN, Audrey Gochenour, RN, Karen Lyons, RN, Beth Bates, RN, and Wendi Hulett, RN.

For more on strides New Mexico hospitals have made in advancing quality and patient safety in their communities, listen to the NMHA Advancing Quality & Patient Safety Podcast at https://anchor.fm/nmha. Podcast guests include healthcare and clinical experts across our state.

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New Mexico Hospital Association (NMHA) represents 46 New Mexico acute care hospitals, on state and federal legislative and regulatory public policy issues. NMHA partners with its members and others to improve the health status of New Mexicans through innovation and best practices. It is an authoritative source for hospital data used in public policy initiatives. NMHA

advocates for the common good and collective interests of its members and patients, in an ever-changing health care environment.

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