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**Study: Longmont United Hospital Patient Outcomes Superior**  
*Clinical outcomes place Longmont United Hospital in the Top 5 in Colorado, for Cardiac Surgery and Overall Cardiac Services, HealthGrades study finds.*

Longmont, CO (October 15, 2007) -- The quality of hospital-based care in America is improving, but the gap between top-performing and poor-performing hospitals persists according to a study released today by HealthGrades, which identifies Longmont United Hospital as being ranked among the best in Colorado for cardiac surgery, cardiology, and overall cardiac services. HealthGrades is the nation's leading independent healthcare ratings company.

The study, which documents a significant variation in care quality between the highest-performing hospitals and all others, also found that if all hospitals performed at the level of hospitals rated with five stars by HealthGrades, 266,604 Medicare lives could have potentially been saved over the three years studied.

“Our research shows that while the overall quality of hospital care in America is improving, the gap between the best-performing hospitals and the worst persists,” said Dr. Samantha Collier, HealthGrades' chief medical officer and author of the study. “This persistent gap makes it imperative that anyone planning to be admitted to a hospital do their homework and seek out highly rated facilities.”

According to *The Tenth Annual HealthGrades Hospital Quality in America Study*, Longmont United Hospital is also recognized in the following areas:

- Ranked Best in region for Overall Cardiac Services
- Ranked Best in region for Cardiac Surgery
- Five-Star Rated for Coronary Bypass Surgery
- Five-Star Rated for Treatment of Heart Failure
- Five-Star Rated for Treatment of Heart Attack

- Five-Star Rated for Treatment of Atrial Fibrillation

“Clinical excellence and superior care is an area we strive to maintain at Longmont United Hospital. It is a pleasure and an honor for our community hospital to achieve these distinctions from a nationally recognized authority on healthcare outcomes. The recognition of our clinical excellence further supports the dedication of our staff and the members of our medical staff to changing the caring experience,” said Mitchell C. Carson, Longmont United Hospital’s President and CEO.

*The Tenth Annual HealthGrades Hospital Quality in America Study* identifies key trends in the quality of care provided by approximately 5,000 hospitals nationwide. HealthGrades researchers analyzed Medicare discharges from every U.S. hospital between 2004 and 2006. Risk-adjusted mortality and complication rates were calculated and hospitals were assigned a 1-star (poor), 3-star (as expected), or 5-star (best) quality rating for 28 diagnoses and procedures from heart failure to hip replacement to pneumonia. Individual hospital quality results from this study are available at [www.healthgrades.com](http://www.healthgrades.com).

Among the study’s key findings:

- Gaps persist between the “best” and the “worst” hospitals across all procedures and conditions studied. Five-star rated hospitals had significantly lower risk-adjusted mortality across all three years studied.
- Across all procedures and conditions studied, there was an approximate 71 percent lower chance of dying in a 5-star rated hospital compared to a 1-star rated hospital.
- Across all procedures and conditions studied, there was an approximate 52 percent lower chance of dying in a 5-star rated hospital compared to the U.S. hospital average.

The 2008 HealthGrades ratings for all hospitals nationwide are available, free of charge, on the organization’s award-winning consumer Web site, located at [www.healthgrades.com](http://www.healthgrades.com). More than three million individuals and employees of some of the nation’s largest employers and health plans visit HealthGrades each month to access quality information about hospitals, nursing homes and physicians. HealthGrades also provides consumers and payers with detailed assessments of hospitals’ patient-safety outcomes, based on indicators developed by the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

***About Longmont United Hospital***

Longmont United Hospital is a full service, community hospital with specialty areas in Women's & Children's Services, Cardiology, Comprehensive Surgical Services, Cancer Care, Emergency and Trauma Services, Transitional Care and Acute Medical Services. It offers quality inpatient and outpatient health care services in addition to 24 hour

emergency department services. The Emergency Department is a Level III trauma center that treats approximately 26,000 patients each year.

A full spectrum of cardiac care - from diagnosis to open heart surgery - is offered at Longmont United Hospital. In 2006 the hospital began offering Minimally Invasive Ablation, a new treatment for atrial fibrillation. Other services include cardiac catheterization, angioplasty, cardiac stents, pacemakers and defibrillators, stress testing, telemetry, echocardiology, atherectomy, and interventional radiology. There is also a specialized cardiac rehabilitation program, including an on-site fitness facility.

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