

**Contact:**

Leslie Mesenburg  
Communications Specialist  
419-557-7884  
mesenbl@firelands.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Firelands Regional Medical Center Among Top 5%  
in the Nation for Patient Safety**

**(March 25, 2011 – Sandusky, Ohio)** Firelands Regional Medical Center was identified as a recipient of the 2011 HealthGrades Patient Safety Excellence Award™, indicating that its patient safety ratings are in the top 5% of U.S. hospitals, in a new study released by HealthGrades, the leading independent healthcare ratings organization. Firelands is one of only 268 hospitals in the country to receive this designation, one of only 16 hospitals in Ohio and the only hospital in the regional area (including the counties of Erie, Huron, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Seneca). The rankings are based on three years of Medicare data that every hospital is required to submit. HealthGrades developed this award to give patients more information about choosing a hospital.

“The significance of this award is that patients at hospitals receiving the HealthGrades Patient Safety Excellence Award were, on average, 46% less likely to experience an adverse patient safety event,” explains Patty Martin, Vice President of Quality & Patient Satisfaction. “We know more and more patients look for information such as this when selecting a hospital. At Firelands, we strive to make sure patient safety is a priority – every single day. Receiving this high of a ranking nationally, for the second year in a row speaks volumes for the commitment of the physicians and the healthcare team to provide an optimal level of care for Firelands’ patients.”

The eighth annual *HealthGrades Patient Safety in American Hospitals study* analyzed nearly 40 million hospitalization records from approximately 5,000 hospitals nationwide that participate in the Medicare program. Participation in the HealthGrades study is not voluntary, and hospitals cannot choose to opt out of the analysis.

According to the study, if all hospitals performed at the level of Patient Safety Excellence Award™ hospitals like Firelands, approximately 174,358 patient safety events and 20,688 Medicare deaths could have been avoided while saving the U.S. approximately \$1.8 billion in excess costs from 2007 through 2009.

“We are pleased to be recognized as one of the best hospitals in the nation and the best in the region for patient safety. Patient safety has always been and always will be a top priority at Firelands Regional Medical Center. From our physicians and nurses who interact one-on-one with patients, to the dozens of committees and small working groups that come together to examine policies and procedures, this award reflects the hard work of so many people,” says Chuck Stark, President & CEO of Firelands Regional Medical Center. “Everyone who works or volunteers at Firelands Regional Medical Center plays a part in the safety of our patients.”

“We’ve seen great advances in medical care in the last few decades, but along with these miraculous advances come greater and greater risks. Hospitals like Firelands Regional Medical Center have shown definitively that it is possible to provide the best in medical care while still focusing on the safety of the patient,” said Rick May, MD, Vice President of Clinical Quality Improvement at HealthGrades and co-author of the study.

The eighth annual HealthGrades Patient Safety in American Hospitals Study evaluates patient safety in U.S. hospitals. HealthGrades used Medicare inpatient data from the Medicare Provider Analysis and Review (MedPAR) database and Patient Safety Indicator software from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to calculate event rates for 13 indicators of patient safety for all of the nation’s hospitals.

-More-

All analysis was based on data from 2007 to 2009 with the exception of Foreign Body Left During Procedure which was based only on data from 2009. These indicators identify the best-performing hospitals, or Patient Safety Excellence Award™ Hospitals, which represent the top 5% of all U.S. hospitals.

In the HealthGrades analysis, the patient safety indicators focus on mortality, hospital-acquired complications and post-operative conditions. Specifically, the indicators studied include:

- Foreign body left during procedure;
- Death in low mortality Diagnostic Related Groupings (DRGs)
- Pressure ulcer (bed sores)
- Death among surgical inpatients with serious treatable complications (previously known as “Failure to Rescue”);
- Iatrogenic pneumothorax (collapsed lung);
- Catheter-related bloodstream infections;
- Post-operative hip fracture;
- Post-operative hemorrhage or hematoma;
- Post-operative physiologic and metabolic derangements;
- Post-operative respiratory failure;
- Post-operative pulmonary embolism or deep vein thrombosis;
- Post-operative sepsis;
- Post-operative abdominal wound dehiscence.

### **About Firelands Regional Medical Center**

Firelands Regional Medical Center is nationally recognized for its award-winning care. As a 400-bed facility, Firelands is ranked #1 in Ohio and in the Top 5% nationally for Vascular Surgery and Overall Orthopedics; Top 10% Nationally in Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation, a Thomson Top 100 Hospital for its Cardiovascular Services, and ranked in the Top 5% nationally for Patient Safety. Firelands Regional Medical Center is the area’s only Accredited Chest Pain Center, is a Certified Primary Stroke Center, is the

area's only Breast Imaging Center of Excellence. Serving a five-county region, Firelands provides many advanced care services to the region including comprehensive cancer care, full-time interventional cardiac care and open heart surgery, wound care services including hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT), acute inpatient rehabilitation, as well as many advanced surgical procedures. For more information about Firelands, visit our website at [firelands.com](http://firelands.com).

###