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# NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE QUALITY INSTITUTE



**A BI-WEEKLY LOOK AT THE BUSINESS & POLITICS OF  
HEALTH CARE IN NEW JERSEY**

## What's Included In This Edition:

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**The Leapfrog Group Fall 2025 Hospital Safety Grades**



**Schwimmer  
Script** 

Linda Schwimmer, JD  
*President & CEO*, 

## An Open Letter to Governor-Elect Sherrill on Health Care Challenges Ahead

As Governor-elect Mikie Sherrill gets ready to take office in January, she faces stiff headwinds on health care. I share these thoughts to support her success, which is critical for all New Jerseyans:

First, you must strengthen the state's core operations because these operations are the key to solving the foreseeable — and unforeseeable — challenges ahead. An immediate crisis is the federal changes to Medicaid — like we've never seen — that will jeopardize health care for many of the over 1.8 million residents currently enrolled. And there is a federal assault on public health and prevention, reproductive health, and medical research, all challenges that require a robust and coordinated "all of government" public health response. On top of these looming crises are lingering New Jersey health care issues — the cans that have been kicked down the road and now sit squarely at the front door of the State House.

As governor, you can be the chief executive to finally tackle the lingering, neglected issues that have long prevented state government from functioning efficiently and effectively. Your top priority should be to assess the needs of relevant agencies —

Treasury's Division of Pension and Benefits; Health; Banking and Insurance; Children and Families; and Human Services — to determine whether these essential agencies possess the talent and technology needed to carry out their missions.

These agencies shoulder enormous responsibilities, and, when they function at their best, can instill public confidence in good government. They have critical roles in keeping health care in New Jersey safe and of high quality. These departments are responsible for everything from licensing providers and facilities, ensuring access in insurer networks, investigating medical mistakes, preventing waste and fraud, and making sure that billions of taxpayer-funded health care is provided efficiently, effectively — and as contracted. Yet these departments have been hollowed out as their missions have expanded, leaving them hamstrung and unable to fulfill those statutory missions...

[Read Full Story](#)

## TAKE FIVE INTERVIEW

Gregory Paulson,  
*Chief Executive Officer, Trenton Health Team*



### Interviews with members, influencers, and noteworthy people

[Trenton Health Team](#) is a member of the Quality Institute's Community and Social Support Council.

**Interview Sneak Peek:** [Trenton Health Team](#), a New Jersey-designated Regional Health Hub, recently helped the City of Trenton earn the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize](#), a national recognition of communities driving systemic improvements in health and wellbeing. Trenton is the only community in New Jersey ever to earn the prize. What changes do you hope residents will begin to see now that Trenton has received this award?

Hopefully, residents have already been seeing those changes. The prize is really a recognition of accomplishments as a community, not just of individual projects or initiatives. I hope the award encourages people who may not know Trenton well, or who only know it through outdated perceptions, to take another look. There's tremendous work happening here and many positive stories unfolding throughout the Trenton community...

[Read Full Interview](#)

## Engaging Local Leaders at the League

The Quality Institute’s Mayors Wellness Campaign (MWC) had a strong presence at the 2025 New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference, where our booth and panel, Bringing Wellness to Your Community, brought together municipal leaders committed to improving the health of their hometowns. Panelists from Point Pleasant Beach, Montclair, and Rockaway Township shared practical strategies ranging from intergenerational technology programs and accessible walking events to coordinated wellness committees, chronic disease prevention classes, and community-wide outreach efforts.



Their presentations highlighted the importance of strong partnerships, consistent communication, and accessible, free programming tailored to local needs. During the session, the Quality Institute also announced \$85,000 in MWC grants to nine New Jersey communities, funded by Walmart and the Quality Institute, to support mental health, stigma reduction, and wellness initiatives statewide.

Thank you to all [MWC Sponsors](#) for supporting our impactful community health work!

[Read the Full Conference Recap](#)



## Nine New Jersey Towns Awarded Grants for Mental Health Programs

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute’s [Mayors Wellness Campaign](#) (MWC) has awarded \$85,000 total in grants to nine New Jersey communities to advance local

initiatives that support mental health, reduce stigma, and promote wellness. The MWC is a partnership between the [Quality Institute](#) and the [New Jersey State League of Municipalities](#).

This year's [award supports programs addressing mental health and stigma](#), with several also focusing on substance use, suicide prevention, and intimate partner violence. The funded towns represent communities of all sizes and regions across the state with three each in North, Central and South Jersey. The grants are funded by [Walmart](#) and the Quality Institute. Their projects include:

- [Atlantic City \(Atlantic County\)](#): *CROWNED: Empowerment for Young Women of Color*
- [Borough of Freehold \(Monmouth County\)](#): *Addressing Anti-Mental Health Stigma in the Spanish-Speaking Community*
- [City of Englewood \(Bergen County\)](#): *Community Mental Health First Aid and Peer Support Groups*
- [City of Plainfield \(Union County\)](#): *Movimiento y Mente (Movement & Mind)*
- [Jersey City \(Hudson County\)](#): *Let's Do Better for a HealthierJC*
- [Montgomery Township \(Somerset County\)](#): *Hope Squad Peer-to-Peer Suicide Prevention Program*
- [Township of Nutley \(Essex County\)](#): *Employee and Community Wellness Program*
- [Township of West Orange \(Essex County\)](#): *Senior Mental Health Support Program (Year 2 Expansion)*
- [Township of Woodbridge \(Middlesex County\)](#): *Pathways to Wellness Program*

[Read Our Press Release](#)



## THE LEAPFROG GROUP FALL 2025 HOSPITAL SAFETY GRADES

[The Leapfrog Group](#), the independent nonprofit advancing patient safety, released its Fall 2025 [Hospital Safety Grades](#). The biannual Safety Grades — ranging from “A” to “F” — assess how well American hospitals protect patients from medical errors, accidents, injuries, and infections.

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute is the Regional Leader for Leapfrog, which provides communities with critical insight into the safety of their local hospitals.

In this latest survey, [New Jersey ranked #3 in the nation for the percentage of “A” hospitals \(52%\)](#), the same ranking as in Spring 2025. Additionally, [New Jersey has the highest rate of Leapfrog Hospital Survey participation in the country — 100%](#).

Here's the breakdown of New Jersey Grades:

- 35 “A” hospitals – 52% (1 less A than Spring 2025)
- 21 “B” hospitals – 31% (3 more B’s than Spring 2025)
- 10 “C” hospitals – 15% (2 less C’s than Spring 2025)
- 1 “D” hospitals – 1% (1 more D than Spring 2025)
- 0 “F” hospitals – 0% (same as Spring 2025)

Five hospitals went up a grade, six went down, and 56 had no change.

The total number of hospitals graded was 67. Two hospitals did not receive a safety grade because there was not enough data available: Bergen New Bridge and The Heights University Hospital (formerly CarePoint Health Christ Hospital).

[See Your Hospital's Grade](#)

[Read Our Press Release](#)



For information on how to join, please contact Virginia Tesser at [vtesser@njhcqi.org](mailto:vtesser@njhcqi.org).

To learn more about our current initiatives, please visit our website at [www.njhcqi.org](http://www.njhcqi.org).

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