LOWN INSTITUTE
HOSPITALS INDEX

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

A GRADE 2026–27

LOWN INSTITUTE
HOSPITALS INDEX

THE LOWN HOSPITALS INDEX STANDS APART

INDEPENDENT RANKINGS THAT MATTER TO YOU, YOUR STAFF, AND COMMUNITY

LownHospitalsIndex.org

A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO HOSPITAL RANKING

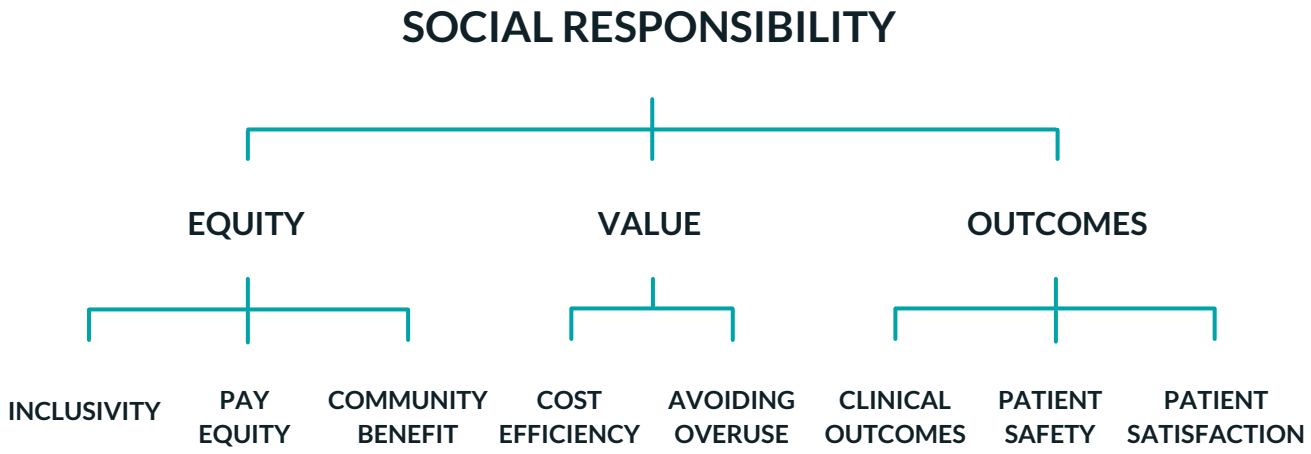
The Lown Institute is an independent think tank advocating bold ideas for a just and caring healthcare system. We envision a system focused on what's best for people, like hospitals caring for those most in need, patients living without fear of financial distress, and health professionals finding joy in their roles.

The Lown Institute Hospitals Index for Social Responsibility is our signature project. It shines a light on hospitals and systems providing exceptional, high-value care. While other rankings limit themselves to what happens inside hospital walls, **we expand the lens**—measuring the hospitals impact on its community.

The Lown Hospitals Index is the ONLY hospital ranking that measures hospitals excellence in health equity, value of care, and patient outcomes—three areas that together define socially responsible healthcare.

> **"The Lown Index grades hospitals based on three weighted sections: 40% equity, 30% value, and 30% outcomes. Nothing comparable appears in any other ranking."**
>
> **Becker's Hospital Review** - *9 takeaways from 3,700+ ranked hospitals*

Hospitals are evaluated using publicly-available data and do not apply or pay to be included. Millions of lines of data contribute to Lown's annual analysis. Review Lown's full methodology.



5 REASONS WHY THE LOWN INDEX RANKINGS STAND APART

1) We measure what matters to patients and communities

Traditional hospital rankings focus primarily on clinical performance or safety. The Lown Hospitals Index does that and more by also **measuring health equity, community investment, and value of care**—capturing a complete picture of what truly matters to patients, families, and communities. These include:

INCLUSIVITY — Socially responsible hospitals **care for all the people in their community**. We measure how well hospitals serve people of lower incomes, lower education, and people of color.

AVOIDING OVERUSE — Patients deserve to receive **all the care they need, and none that they do not**. We examine 12 commonly overused services, such as head imaging and back surgeries.

> "THIS IS THE ONLY RANKING THAT SHOWS HOW WE SERVE OUR COMMUNITY, NOT JUST OUR PATIENTS."

COMMUNITY BENEFIT—Hospitals are expected to **provide financial assistance, invest in their communities, and care for those insured by Medicaid**. We measure the amount that hospitals put back into their community.

2) Comprehensive and fair

The Lown Institute uses **publicly-available datasets and a transparent methodology** to assess the social responsibility of:

- 2,700+ acute care U.S. hospitals
- 900+ critical access U.S. hospitals
- 300+ health systems
- Hospitals and systems in all 50 states

By measuring 50+ metrics across equity, value, and patient outcomes, the Lown Index provides a comprehensive and holistic view of how hospitals serve their patients and communities.

5 REASONS WHY THE LOWN INDEX RANKINGS STAND APART

3) Independent and credible

As an independent nonprofit think tank and not a commercial rankings publisher, we offer **a credible and objective evaluation of hospital performance that others can't match.** Our work joins social purpose with research and analysis and is free from potential conflicts of interest.

4) We measure things others don't

The Lown Index **centers health equity and value of care as foundational to hospital performance** and to identifying institutional leaders in the movement for socially responsible healthcare. Measures like Racial Inclusivity, Pay Equity, Avoiding Overuse, and Community Benefit are largely absent from other rankings but have always been central to our work.

5) Designed to point the way, not just compare hospitals

Our rankings are built to help hospitals meet their social mission. Hospitals receive detailed report cards that **highlight strengths, opportunities, and call out areas where improvement** is needed.

Some hospitals may receive an "A" in one measure, and a "C" in another. The Lown Hospitals Index supports a meaningful understanding of quality for hospitals to follow year over year.

HOW WE MEASURE

Learn what's behind each metric, grade, and ranking.

METHODS PAPER

LOWN HOSPITALS INDEX VS. OTHER RANKINGS

The Lown Hospitals Index includes more than fifty metrics spanning the categories of health equity, value of care, and patient outcomes.

METRICS	Lown Hospitals Index	U.S. News	LeapFrog
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	●	No	No
HEALTH EQUITY	●	No	●
Community Benefit	●	No	No
Pay Equity	●	No	No
Inclusivity	●	Limited	No
Racial Inclusivity	●	No	No
Fair Share Spending	●	No	No
VALUE OF CARE	●	No	No
Avoiding Overuse	●	No	No
Cost Efficiency	●	No	No
PATIENT OUTCOMES	●	●	Limited
Patient Satisfaction	●	●	Limited
Patient Safety	●	●	●
Clinical Outcomes	●	●	Limited

BENEFITS OF A LOWN AWARD BADGE

The Lown Badge Program helps hospitals and systems showcase excellence at serving their patients and community by publicizing their mission-driven impact.

Enhance your public reputation and credibility

Independent recognition from the Lown Hospitals Index **positions your organization as a leader in socially responsible healthcare**. This external validation strengthens credibility with patients, policymakers, regulators, and community stakeholders—reinforcing your hospital's performance and mission.

Boost workforce recruitment, engagement, and retention

High grades on the Lown Hospitals Index **validate a mission-driven culture and attract staff** seeking alignment between values and care delivery.

> **"Earning 'A' grades in Social Responsibility and Value of Care reflects the heart of our mission—and the compassion and excellence our team brings to every patient, every day."**
>
> - Hospital CEO

Show how you stand out from the competition

Whether you're a state leader or the only hospital in your region earning top grades in Community Benefit, Health Equity, or Value of Care, a Lown Badge **credibly demonstrates leadership** where others may be falling short.

Strengthen patient trust and confidence

A Lown Badge serves as a clear, trusted signal of high-performing, socially responsible care. By providing **third-party validation of outcomes, equity, and value**, it supports patient confidence and informed decision-making in an increasingly competitive healthcare marketplace.

Demonstrate impact to donors and community partners

A Lown badge provides independent, data-backed evidence of your organization's impact. For donors, foundations, and community partners, it **demonstrates accountability and follow-through on mission commitments**.

EXPLORE YOUR HOSPITAL'S BADGE OPPORTUNITIES

Finding out how you rank on the Lown Hospitals Index, learning which badges you've earned, and exploring Lown data offerings is easy.

Badge Licensing

For information on how you can share the news through licensing Lown Badges and access no-cost press release templates, fill out this form or contact our hospital support team at (617) 992-9361 or index@lowninstitute.org.

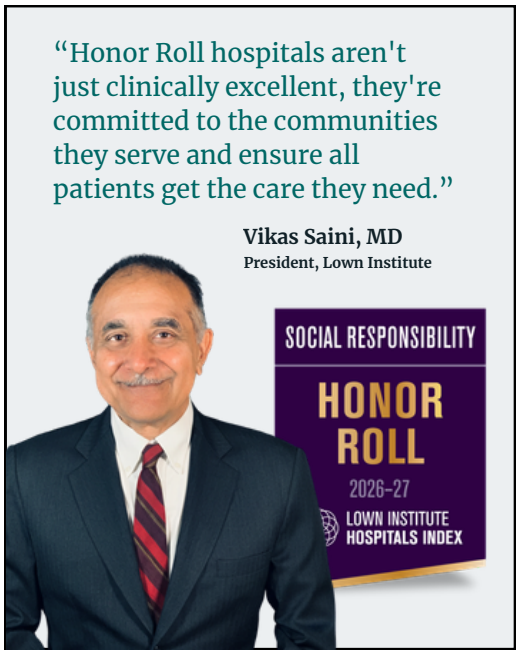
You can also learn more by visiting our hospital resources page for:

- Examples of how others have shared their recognition
- Award press kit
- Methodology
- Request a quote for licensing Lown Badges

Data Licensing

For organizations seeking deeper analysis, customized hospital- and system-level datasets are available for purchase. Complete a Data Access Application or contact index@lowninstitute.org for more information

In keeping with the Lown Institute's commitment to transparency, our rankings, grades, and key hospital characteristics data can be downloaded for free on the Lown Hospitals Index's Rankings site.



LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR HOSPITAL'S PERFORMANCE

For help understanding and sharing your hospital's performance on the Lown Hospitals Index, including questions about the Lown Badge Program, contact the hospital support team at (617) 992-9361 or index@lowninstitute.org.

STAY CONNECTED BY SUBSCRIBING

We invite top hospitals and systems like yours to join our community by subscribing to our newsletters.

Hospitals on Purpose
This monthly newsletter is focused on socially responsible hospitals and the communities they serve. Subscribe for early access to Lown rankings and speaker events, and need-to-know news affecting the hospitals sector.

LownHospitalsIndex.org/subscribe

LOWN INSTITUTE
Weekly

The Lown Weekly
This weekly newsletter provides original analysis and curated news on issues related to socially responsible healthcare, like medical overuse, accountability, health equity, and human connection.

LownInstitute.org/subscribe

ABOUT THE LOWN HOSPITALS INDEX

The Lown Institute Hospitals Index for Social Responsibility is the first national ranking to evaluate hospitals on their social responsibility, including metrics of health equity and value of care alongside traditional outcomes measures. The Lown Index takes into account the full breadth of what hospitals do as care providers, employers, and community partners and **seeks to shine a light on those hospitals that provide exceptional, high-value patient care to everyone in their communities**.

WWW.LOWNHOSPITALSINDEX.ORG