



## **NEWS**

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **Saint Luke's Health System named among 2009 Most Wired Hospitals**

*Economy forces most wired hospitals to look closely at IT spending – clinical IT still a priority*

*KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Saint Luke's Health System has been named to the nation's Most Wired winners according to the results of the 2009 Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study released today in the July issue of *Hospitals & Health Networks* magazine.*

This is the ninth time Saint Luke's Health System has been named to a *Hospitals & Health Networks* "most wired" list, more than any other Kansas City area hospital.

The economic crisis is forcing many hospitals to make tough decisions with scarce resources, including delaying and scaling down information technology (IT) projects, according to a newly released survey of America's "most wired" hospitals and health systems. While progress has been made and incentives to implement IT will be available through the recently passed stimulus legislation, many hospitals still have a long way to go.

The 100 Most Wired hospitals are torn between building on their IT successes and keeping a sharp eye on budgets. Marking its 11<sup>th</sup> year, the Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study continues to lead the field in analyses and benchmarking of health care IT.

"Most Wired is a method to benchmark the organization with our peers and track progress to achieving meaningful adoption of health care information technology," said Debe Gash, vice president, chief information officer, Saint Luke's Health System. "The ongoing support of our board and hospital leadership has enabled the organization to continue leveraging information technology to improve the delivery of care to our patients, creating a positive work environment and improving the overall experience for our patients."

“The economic slowdown is forcing hospitals to look closely at IT spending,” said Alden Solovy, executive editor of *Hospitals & Health Networks* magazine. “Most Wired hospitals are doing their best to stay the course.”

To complicate matters, the great unknown of health care reform looms in the near future and a number of regulatory changes are already heading down the pike, including the shift to ICD-10.

“As the health reform debate continues, it’s clear that IT will play an even more important role in the health system of tomorrow,” said Rich Umbdenstock, president and CEO of the American Hospital Association (AHA). “Most Wired hospitals help illustrate IT in action—improving efficiency, quality, and safety of care while helping to control costs.”

Hospitals also continue to invest in IT that supports quality and safety initiatives. Investment in electronic medication management is considered one of the fundamentals of using IT to improve care. The 2009 Most Wired Survey and Benchmarking Study shows an overall increase in both provider order entry of medications and electronic bedside matching at the time medications are administered.

Of the organizations completing the survey this year, 38 hospitals and health systems—6.8 percent of the sample—have effectively deployed information technology at both ends of the medication administration process. This compares with 23 hospitals and health systems in 2008, or 4.1 percent of the sample.

At the typical hospital responding to the survey, 26 percent of medications are entered electronically by physicians, compared with 19 percent in 2008. The typical respondent has 40 percent of medications matched at the bedside, compared with 30 percent in 2008.

The Most Wired Survey is conducted annually by *Hospitals & Health Networks* magazine, the journal of the AHA, which uses the results to name the 100 Most Wired hospitals and health systems. It focuses on how the nation’s hospitals use information technologies for quality, customer service, public health and safety, business processes, and workforce issues.

*Hospitals & Health Networks* conducted the 2009 survey in cooperation with McKesson Corp. and the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives. The July *H&HN* cover story detailing results is available at [www.hhnmag.com](http://www.hhnmag.com).

### **About Saint Luke’s Health System**

*Saint Luke’s Health System consists of 11 area hospitals and several primary and specialty care practices, and provides a range of inpatient, outpatient, and home care services. Founded as a faith-based, not-for-profit organization, our mission includes a commitment to the highest levels of excellence in health care and the advancement of medical research and education. The health system is an aligned organization in which the physicians and hospitals assume responsibility for enhancing the physical, mental, and spiritual health of people in the metropolitan Kansas City area and the surrounding region.*

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