

## United Regional Health Care System achieves Joint Commission Wound Management Certification using WoundExpert®



United Regional Health Care System has been a healing power in North Texas for more than 90 years. Today, as the only full service hospital within the region, United Regional's commitment to excellence in health care is evident in the services offered. Services include a Joint Commission Certified Wound Care Center, Lead Level III Trauma Center, Cancer Treatment Center, Bariatric Center of Excellence, Stroke Center, Children's Center, Level II Nursery, Cardiac Institute, technologically advanced surgical services, and a wide array of ancillary services including PET/CT and MRI.

In March of 2007, United Regional's Wound Care & Hyperbarics Center became the first Texas facility, and only the third independent hospital-based program in the country, to achieve the heralded Wound Management Certification from the Joint Commission.

"In addition to comprehensive patient and wound evaluation, WoundExpert supports Joint Commission standards for patient care. It adheres to national patient safety goals for improved patient identification, hand-off communications, and medication reconciliation. WoundExpert was vital in our obtaining Joint Commission Wound Management Certification, the first hospital based wound center in Texas and only the third in the country to do so, as of March 2007."

Leo C. Mercer, M.D., FACS, CWS  
Vice President of Medical Affairs  
Medical Director

The Joint Commission Certification Program for Wound Management provides a comprehensive evaluation of a facility's services, including use of evidence-based processes, quality-improvement efforts, and outcomes. It represents the industry's gold standard in health care.

The Wound Care Center, begun in 1999, has seen its patient load increase steadily. The originally three-times-a-week operation was soon expanded to five days a week.

On average, about 130 patients per week go through the center's doors, with close to 33 percent of that number representing new patients. In 2006, more than 7,900 inpatient and outpatient visits were treated. The center also provides complete HBOT intervention services.

"The toughest part of providing excellent care to our patients isn't keeping up with changing products. It is showing how we make a difference in the life of each patient. WoundExpert allows us to clearly document our healing excellence."

Derek Ruvalcaba, CRT, CHT, CWCA  
Manager, Wound Care & Hyperbarics

“When we started our Wound Care Center seven years ago, having the ability to validate how we were performing was difficult,” adds Derek. “WoundExpert provided us with the ability to run outcome reports and show how well we are doing and what areas we needed to improve upon.”

United Regional began preparing for certification in 2005. An application for an on-site visit was submitted in June 2006, and inspectors from the Joint Commission arrived in January 2007.

Inspectors met with members of United Regional’s S.W.A.T. (Skin Wound Action Team). This United Regional multidisciplinary team is composed of care-givers from various departments who all have specialized training in wound healing.

United Regional’s focus on quality has achieved dramatic results. For instance, in 2005, United Regional saw about 12 percent of patients developing pressure ulcers while in acute care. The national average for similarly sized facilities is about eight or nine percent.

Today, United Regional’s rate has dropped to 3.5 percent. The hospital’s healing average was 98 percent for 2006, beating the national average of nearly 90 percent.

“WoundExpert allows us to objectively validate our outcomes performance,” Derek said. “Our recent Joint Commission certification only validates what we’ve always known. You cannot get better care anywhere else in the country.”

United Regional is a recognized thought leader nationally and locally, in the North Central Texas and Southern Oklahoma community, serving as the clinical campus for Midwestern State University Wilson School of Nursing and Vernon College.

This Joint Commission certification clearly demonstrates United Regional’s overall dedication to excellence in health care for the community served. Together, the United Regional team works to provide excellence in health care for the communities they serve.

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