

Competitive Web Analysis for [hospital project]

a) Methods

The goals of the competitive web analysis were to identify content and functionality of peer hospital websites, both to inform the redesign of best practices as well as to gauge the local competition.

Based on input from [hospital project], we chose the following hospital websites for this analysis:

Local Peer Hospitals

- Holy Cross Hospital
- Howard County General
- Inova Fairfax Hospital
- Montgomery General
- Shady Grove Adventist Hospital
- Sibley Memorial Hospital
- Washington Hospital Center

Other Peer Hospitals

- Baptist Health
- Bryn Mawr Hospital
- Lawrence Hospital
- Newton-Wellesley Hospital
- St. Alexius Medical Center
- Southwest General Hospital
- Wellspan.org

Using the User Analysis & Task Analysis we established general and specific criteria to analyze competitive websites. The general criteria addresses how each website functions for all users and general tasks. We looked at the following general criteria:

- Interactivity: how the site uses the Internet: e-mail newsletters, online store, online patient registration, online class registration
- Promotion - how items are promoted on the home page and elsewhere in the site
- Search: how the site uses search and search results
- Navigation: how the user moves through the site

Considering the specific tasks that the user groups seek to accomplish, we looked at the websites using the following specific criteria:

- Affiliations to Other Organizations
- Awards
- Classes
- Donating & Volunteering
- Employment
- General Health News
- Health Content
- Hospital Events
- Hospital News
- Hospital Phone Numbers
- Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient
- Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor
- Links to Employee & Physician Areas
- Mission & Vision
- Physician Directory
- Specialized Services/Centers
- Support Groups

- Width & Height of Pages

We rated and commented on each of these criteria for all of the analyzed sites.

The purpose of the ratings is to allow a quick review of what ideas and implementations each website has to offer for the [hospital project] website redesign. The rating range from 1 to 5: with 1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest, and 3 representing an average. Practically, ideas and implementations that rank 4 and 5 are worth consideration for this redesign; those items ranking 1, 2, or 3 can safely be ignored. For clarity, we have **bolded** the criteria that ranks a 5 or that stands out as an example of best practices that we should consider for the redesign.

“None found” means the feature could not be found after time spent on the site. It does not necessarily mean that it is not on the site, but that an average user would not locate it within a reasonable time.

b) Findings - Local Peer Hospital Sites

i) Holy Cross Hospital

Silver Spring, MD
holycrosshealth.org

Overall: Good clean look, and it covers all the basic elements of a hospital website. Ultimately, however, it is a generic & static site which does not give the user a compelling reason to return.

Interactivity	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e-Newsletters virtual tours link to WebNursery
Navigation	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Left vertical navigation only, no functionality on mouse-over In sub-pages, there is a "Related Links" on the right. This is not visually integrated with the content and information can easily be missed
Promotion	3	The hospital expansion is the front & center, with links to TV & radio ad spots. Premier services are featured, but the promotion is not large enough to give any detail. No interesting rotation.
Search	2	No search box on home page, drop-down menus for "Fast Finder"
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	none listed
Awards	1	none listed
Classes	2	Link on navigation - combined with events & support groups - searchable - not clearly displayed
Donating & Volunteering	2	Link on navigation - goes to capitol fund article - "donate online" link leads to an 'under construction' page - Volunteering is under "Career Opportunities"
Employment	5	Link on navigation - job search - online job application process
Health News	3	Yes, though not prominent on home page - provided by Coffey Communications
Health Content	4	Yes, via "Health Topic Centers" - available on home page as a dropdown menu - text search available on sub-page - provided by Coffey Communications
Hospital Events	3	Static promotion on home page, link on navigation - combined with classes & support groups - searchable
Hospital News	2	Link on navigation, home page promotion area - link leads to a page empty of news, promotion is for an employees-only feature
Hospital Phone Numbers	5	Main number displayed prominently on homepage - also on the "Contact Us" persistent link
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	4	"For Patients & Visitors" link on navigation - grouped with Visitor information - downloadable hospital guide
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	4	"For Patients & Visitors" link on navigation - grouped with Patient information - downloadable hospital guide
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	4	Physician Area, access to an online scheduling system
Mission & Vision	2	Not prominently displayed
Physician Directory	3	Yes, via search
Specialized	3	Yes, "Premier Services" have a rotating promotion on the home page -

Services/Centers		the actual content seems generic
Support Groups	3	No direct call-out, but grouped with classes & events
Width & Height of Pages	3	750 pixels wide, fixed width, flexible height

ii) Howard County General

Columbia, MD

hcgh.org

Overall: Excellent navigation & interactivity. Clean home page, but could have shorter click-pathing. For example, the navigation item “News & Events” leads to a page that just has further links to events and news. After two clicks, the user can find actual information. This is a site rich in information & interactivity, but much of it is buried under buttons & links. It would benefit from a taller & more promotional design. Overall, very good.

Interactivity	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online bill payment & information storage (Internet Payment Exchange) • WebNursery • Online job application
Navigation	5	Primary navigation is logical, comprehensive, & understandable - good use of a ‘related links’ area on the right side within content pages
Promotion	4	4 graphic promotions at bottom of home page
Search	2	Link only on persistent navigation, search results not detailed, no dropdown menu for Health Information search
Affiliations to Other Organizations	3	Johns Hopkins mentioned in logo and as a promo, but without explanation of the relationship
Awards		None found
Classes	4	Link prominently featured on the home page, good search but no “upcoming classes” information
Donating & Volunteering	4	Link prominently featured on the home page
Employment	4	Link prominently featured on the home page
Health News	-	None found
Health Content	4	Link prominently featured on the home page, well integrated into the site design
Hospital Events	3	Link prominently featured on the home page, but content is buried under 2 clicks
Hospital News	3	Link prominently featured on the home page, but content is buried under 2 clicks
Hospital Phone Numbers	3	Phone number displayed on home page, also in “Contact Us”
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	4	Link prominently featured on the home page, content clearly organized
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	4	Link prominently featured on the home page, content clearly organized
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	-	Possibly a link on the main page, but it is a login with no other context
Mission & Vision	-	None found
Physician Directory	3	yes
Specialized Services/Centers	2	Yes, but not promoted above other services
Support Groups	2	Under “Classes”, but link only on right contextual menu
Width & Height of Pages	3	760 wide, fixed width, 500 high on home page, flexible height on sub-pages

iii) Inova Fairfax Hospital

Fairfax, VA

inova.org

Overall: Inova Fairfax Hospital website suffers from a confusion common with hospital websites that belong to a larger hospital organization. In this instance the parent site (Inova) and the child site (Inova Fairfax) share the same look and feel, so the website gives the user no sign that they are in a different site with different navigation. This leads to user confusion and a over-reliance on the browser “back” button for the user to regain their sense of context.

Interactivity	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • myHealth (3rd-party application that allows users to store their medical information online and access health content) • Employment has an extensive application to manage information online • Virtual hospital tour on home page • Online donation
Navigation	2	Confusing blend of specific hospital and general parent company navigation
Promotion	2	Static promotion for a hospital overview, 1 specialized center, and awards
Search	-	Persistent search link, that link is non-functional
Affiliations to Other Organizations	2	Home page promotion lists 6 affiliated schools, but no way to find out any further information about these relationships
Awards	4	Prominently featured on the home page
Classes	5	Prominently featured on the home page, good search
Donating & Volunteering		Prominently featured on the home page
Employment	5	Prominently featured on the home page, Careers page very extensive, with much content and interactivity
Health News	-	None found
Health Content	2	Yes, but buried under “Classes” link
Hospital Events	3	Prominently featured on the home page
Hospital News	3	Prominently featured on the home page
Hospital Phone Numbers	2	Not on home page, no explicit link on home page, under “Patient/Visitor Info” link
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	3	Prominently featured on the home page
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	3	Prominently featured on the home page
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	1	On the parent Inova site, but not on the hospital site
Mission & Vision	1	Could not locate
Physician Directory	3	Prominently featured on the home page
Specialized Services/Centers	3	One featured on home page
Support Groups	2	Located under “Classes” link on home page
Width & Height of Pages	3	700 pixels wide, fixed width, 700 high on home page, height flexible on other pages

iv) Montgomery General

Olney, MD

montgomerygeneral.com

Overall: Good looking site, but it feels very static. The lack of promotional areas and buttons that look clickable on the home page detract from its design. Good inclusion of the specialized centers within the navigation, although the center's short content layout prevents users from experiencing the richness of their content.

Interactivity	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online job application • Various calculation widgets
Navigation	3	Adequate, secondary navigation is for Centers
Promotion	1	Press release headlines only
Search	3	Search input persistently displayed, search results are functional
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	None found
Awards	1	Accreditation, but no awards
Classes	2	Located under "For Your Health" link, average search
Donating & Volunteering	2	Link on home page, but lacking in detail in the content pages
Employment	3	Link on the home page, average search & below average supporting information
Health News	-	None found
Health Content	2	Located under "For Your Health" link, no search capability, limited content
Hospital Events	3	Headlines featured on home page, but navigation to other event information is confusing
Hospital News	3	Headlines featured on home page, but navigation to other news is confusing
Hospital Phone Numbers	2	In home page footer, but not other pages - no other display of phone number of links to phone numbers of directories
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	2	Link displayed on the home page, but "Patient Information Guide" is far down the content page
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	2	Link displayed on the home page, but no visitor-specific information displayed
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	3	Physician-only link on home page
Mission & Vision	-	None found
Physician Directory	2	Link prominently displayed on the home page, search by area of specialty only
Specialized Services/Centers	5	Navigation to the Centers are prominently displayed throughout the site. Pages for the centers have a sub-navigation and the pages display within the overall hospital design
Support Groups	-	None displayed
Width & Height of Pages	3	760 pixels wide, fixed width, home page is 500 pixels high, height varies on sub-pages

v) Shady Grove Adventist Hospital

Shady Grove, MD

adventisthealthcare.com/SGAH

Overall: Home page could benefit from using more vertical space. As it is, all information is a click or two away, and there is no room for any promotion. Login for MyHealthCare Manager very prominent with no explanation of what it is. This site suffers from the parent organization/child hospital problem - making navigation throughout the site confusing to users.

Interactivity	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physician search Job search & application
Navigation	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top horizontal navigation - 2 items have menus that display on mouse-over, the others do not and there is no visual difference between them Top horizontal navigation - 1 item opens a new browser window, 1 item opens a page with a different top horizontal navigation Left vertical menu provides contextual navigation Easy to lose context of Shady Grove and end up in Adventist Hospital Main
Promotion	2	minimal
Search	4	Search persistent - search results include preview of text
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	None found
Awards	2	Although on the site, they are buried 4 levels down with no promotion
Classes	2	Many classes, poorly organized
Donating & Volunteering	4	"Make a Contribution" and "Volunteer" links on home page
Employment	4	Search & application online
Health News	-	none
Health Content	3	Provided by Medical Network, opens in a new browser window
Hospital Events	2	Grouped with classes, but no "upcoming events" information
Hospital News	4	Prominently featured on the home page
Hospital Phone Numbers	3	In footer, "About Us" - no hospital directory
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	5	"Patients & Visitors" link on home page, a downloadable Patient Guide (in pdf format)
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	5	"Patients & Visitors" link on home page, Hotels & Lodging page
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	4	"Physicians & Staff" link on main page
Mission & Vision	4	Under "About Us"
Physician Directory	2	On navigation, but not integrated within site -- search opens in a new browser window
Specialized Services/Centers	4	"Medical Services" on left navigation on the home page lists their specialized items, then "View All Services"
Support Groups	2	Within Events and Classes
Width & Height of Pages	2	760 pixels wide, fixed width, home page is 560 tall, other pages flexible height

vi) Sibley Memorial Hospital

Washington, DC

sibley.org

Overall: Good at promoting the hospital, not as good at solving user-based goals. They are focused on the hospital itself, not including any general health news or information.. Although removing that content makes the site less informative, its absence allows them to have very clean navigation & search.

Interactivity	2	Nice dynamic 3-part promotion (but it is for employees)
Navigation	5	Clear and comprehensive
Promotion	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large static photo of the hospital • Large promotion for specialized care, rotating • Awards could be better organized
Search	4	Clean results, absence of health news & content makes for cleaner results
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	None found
Awards	3	WebMD link, among others - execution is lacking
Classes	3	Under "Events/Programs"
Donating & Volunteering	2	"On Giving" in navigation, but no sign of volunteering information
Employment	4	"Employment" in navigation - job search - online job application process
Health News	-	None found
Health Content	-	None found
Hospital Events		Under "Events/Programs"
Hospital News	5	On main navigation, promoted with links on home page
Hospital Phone Numbers	4	Main number in footer, directory from navigation
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	2	Nothing specific
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	3	Visiting hours displayed in home page
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	5	Links on the home page
Mission & Vision	3	Mission statement only, no vision statement
Physician Directory	3	search
Specialized Services/Centers	4	Yes, though not well promoted
Support Groups	3	Under "Events/Programs"
Width & Height of Pages	3	705 pixels wide, fixed width, height flexible

vii) Washington Hospital Center

Washington, DC

whcenter.org

Overall: Good clean look, and it competently covers all the basic elements of a hospital website. Ultimately, however, it is a generic & static site which does not give the user a compelling reason to return.

Interactivity	4	Schedule physician appointments, billing inquiries, online gift store, seminar registration
Navigation	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • top horizontal persistent (w/ mouse-overs) • left vertical menu that changes with page context
Promotion	5	Good use on the home page of the specialized services in the upper right, also prominent display of US News award. Otherwise, a lackluster block of text and a link to view their current Metro ad.
Search	3	Input box on the home page, results page
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	No, just their corporate affiliations
Awards	4	Prominently featured on the home page
Classes	1	Could not locate
Donating & Volunteering	5	Prominently featured on the home page
Employment	4	Prominently featured on the home page
Health News	1	Could not locate
Health Content	2	Yes, but poorly integrated - supplied by A.D.A.M.
Hospital Events	1	None called out as such, maybe "Spotlight"
Hospital News	4	Prominently featured on the home page
Hospital Phone Numbers	3	On home page footer & "Contact Us" page
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	5	Prominently featured on the home page
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	3	No, but information displays prominently under Patient Guide
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	4	Primary navigation category "For Health Professionals"
Mission & Vision	3	Under "About Us"
Physician Directory	5	Yes, also a "Washington Top Doctors" section
Specialized Services/Centers	1	Could not locate
Support Groups	1	Could not locate
Width & Height of Pages	3	760 pixels wide, fixed width, flexible height

c) Findings - Other Peer Hospital Sites

i) Baptist Health

Miami, FL
baptisthealth.net

Overall: Both the parent site and its child hospital sites are not compelling. All the usual hospital information is present, but the organization could be more intuitive. Also, the home page has ample room for promotion, but neither the content nor the design are compelling.

Interactivity	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online health tools • Online Pre-Registration (maternity only) • Online Appointments • 3rd party baby photos • E-newsletter sign-up
Navigation	3	Top horizontal navigation & a left vertical navigation - a little confusing as to what is where
Promotion	2	Home page has adequate promotional spaces, but they are static and poorly designed. Good job of linking to external news articles
Search	3	Search on top navigation, search results do not contain enough information for the user to make a guess on the relevance before clicking
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	None found
Awards	-	None found
Classes	3	Under "Events & Education" lists upcoming classes, but finding full event listing is not easy
Donating & Volunteering	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Foundation" on left navigation - they have many foundations so the page is a landing page pointing to the other foundations, no online donating • Volunteering is under "General Information" and "Employment"
Employment	4	On top navigation - Job search and online job application, along with supporting employment & living information - has promotional area for 'Best Employer' awards
Health News	-	none
Health Content	3	"A-Z Health Topics Index" on top navigation, fairly robust breadth of content accessed through dropdown menus and a-z hyperlinks, no search
Hospital Events	2	No promotion on home page, under "Events & Education" lists upcoming events
Hospital News	2	Under "General Information"
Hospital Phone Numbers	-	Under individual hospital sites
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	1	No content labeled as such
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	1	No content labeled as such
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	3	Listed in left navigation
Mission & Vision	-	None found
Physician Directory	3	Link in top navigation, average search
Specialized Services/Centers	-	None found

Support Groups	4	Listed in left navigation
Width & Height of Pages	3	1000 pixels wide, 1200 tall on home page

ii) Bryn Mawr Hospital

Bryn Mawr, PA

mainlinehealth.org/bm/

Overall: Probably the best execution of the parent-child relationship between a hospital group and an individual hospital. The “related links” on the right side is worth noting. But the site suffers from too many elements being buried under general categories, and the design of their promotions can only help so much.

Interactivity	3	Link to Carepages.com Online job application Online appointment
Navigation	4	“Popular Pages” dropdown menu Difficulty navigating back to the hospital main page Good “Related Links” element on right of page design
Promotion	4	One large Flash area promoting the hospital in general - 7 smaller promotional areas, but the vertical layout of these might dissuade users from viewing them all
Search	3	Persistent search box, average results
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	None found
Awards	2	Awards not promoted enough to make an impression
Classes	1	No access point other than “Calendar” in top navigation
Donating & Volunteering	2	Buried under “About Bryn Mawr Hospital”
Employment	3	“Careers” on top navigation and in “For Healthcare Professionals” - job search & online job application - good supporting content
Health News	-	None found
Health Content	3	“Health Library” provided by EBSCO Publishing - average execution
Hospital Events	4	Good event search widget
Hospital News	4	News headlines promoted on home page, “News” in top navigation
Hospital Phone Numbers	2	Main phone number listed at the bottom of generally long pages, “telephone directory” listed under “Patient & Visitor Information”
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	3	“Patient & Visitor Information” on top navigation - long page means user has to scroll to find information, could be better organized - nothing directly addressed to the patient
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	3	“Patient & Visitor Information” on top navigation - long page means user has to scroll to find information, could be better organized
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	2	“For Healthcare Professionals” in top navigation, with links for nurses and physicians only
Mission & Vision	4	Not labeled as such, but Flash promotion on home page makes a more conceptual statement
Physician Directory	3	Prominently displayed throughout the site
Specialized Services/Centers	4	“Centers & Programs” called out separately from “Departments and Divisions” on top navigation - well designed content for each
Support Groups	-	Not found
Width & Height of Pages	4	810 pixels wide, widens to the width of the browser, 2000+ tall on home page

iii) Lawrence Hospital

Bronxville, NY

lawrencehealth.org

Overall: This website has a rudimentary design that allow the users to accomplish the most basic of tasks.

Interactivity	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online gift shop • Online nursery
Navigation	2	Stacked tabs for top navigation, not the best choice
Promotion	2	None effective enough to mention
Search	-	None found
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	None found
Awards	4	Gold medal prominently displayed on home page
Classes	1	Only found under "New at LHC" link in top navigation - unintuitive
Donating & Volunteering	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Donor Information" link in top navigation, page does not have much detail • No volunteering information found
Employment	2	No online job search or job application, downloads a pdf of job openings
Health News	-	None found
Health Content	-	None found
Hospital Events	1	None found outside the "New at LHC" section, which seems more news-based
Hospital News	2	"New at LHC" on top navigation, but content is a confusing mix of events, classes and news
Hospital Phone Numbers	5	6 main phone numbers displayed on bottom of home page
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	3	Link prominently displayed on navigation, but page is quite long
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	1	"Directions to LHC" on top navigation, otherwise nothing directly addressed to visitors and could not find visiting hours
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	4	Links for each in top navigation
Mission & Vision	-	None found
Physician Directory	4	Link prominently displayed on navigation - link to Mapquest on each listing
Specialized Services/Centers	-	None found
Support Groups	-	None found
Width & Height of Pages		690 pixels wide, but widens to the width of the browser

iv) Newton-Wellesley Hospital

Newton, MA

nwh.org

Overall: This website has one of the best home pages in this group, with excellent use of promotion and use of space within the browser window. The search results also stand out as exceptional.

Interactivity	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online hospital pre-registration • E-mail newsletter sign-up on home page & throughout • Online class registration available for some classes • Use of Flash on home page
Navigation	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanics of the navigation are very good - good use of the same sub-menus in main navigation and on the left on lower pages to express site hierarchy • Flash on home page reduces the effectiveness of main navigation by moving its placement on the screen • "Community Health Resources" could be broken out into separate areas
Promotion	5	Flash area home page rotates promotions, as well as 6 other areas
Search	5	Input box persistent, search results grouped by primary navigation categories
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	None found
Awards	3	Displayed in rotating Flash area
Classes	4	Under "Community Health Resources", clear & well-organized, online class registration
Donating & Volunteering	4	Promotional area on home page
Employment	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd party job search displays in new browser window without any of the main site's branding or art • No online job application
Health News	-	None found
Health Content	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, but 3rd party site was not working • Articles searchable through main search, but unorganized within the site
Hospital Events	4	Promoted events on home page, calendar view of all events
Hospital News	4	Promoted hospital news area on home page
Hospital Phone Numbers	2	Not displayed on home page, found under "Patients and Visitors" > "Welcome Center"
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	3	Link on primary navigation
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	3	Link on primary navigation
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	-	None found
Mission & Vision	-	None found
Physician Directory	5	Clear, flexible search with concise results
Specialized Services/Centers	4	Yes, the site make the distinction between departments and "Centers" on primary navigation
Support Groups	4	Under "Community Health Resources", clear & well-organized

Width & Height of Pages	4	780 pixels wide, fixed width, 1100 tall on home page, variable on content pages
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v) St. Alexius Medical Center

Hoffman Estates, IL

stalexius.org

Overall: Having separate URLs for different parts of the hospital presents an organization & design challenge. This website is a good example of the costs & benefits of such a strategy, more often revealing the costs. Although users can mostly find the basic information, navigation is confusing and inconsistent. This provides a good example of how not to implement the specialized centers.

Interactivity	3	Online donation Online appointment request
Navigation	2	Too much content hidden behind navigational links
Promotion	2	A couple of text-only promotions on home page
Search	-	None found
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	None found
Awards	-	None found for the hospital in general
Classes	1	Found some classes through one of the Centers, but nothing on the main site
Donating & Volunteering	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donation link prominently displayed on navigation - leads to a separate website - online donation • No volunteering information found
Employment	4	Link prominently displayed on navigation - leads to a separate website, with job search, online job application & robust supporting content
Health News	-	None found on main site, specific health news found on Centers websites
Health Content	2	"Health Information" link on navigation, leads to a handful of articles, but no health content - some specific health content found in the Centers websites
Hospital Events	2	"Community Calendar" in navigation leads to a page of pdf downloads for seminars, programs, etc.
Hospital News	-	None found
Hospital Phone Numbers	4	Main phone number prominent on home page
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	2	None found on main site, some information found on Centers websites
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	4	"Guidelines for Visitors" link prominent on home page
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	-	None found
Mission & Vision	4	First content displayed on the "About St Alexius" page
Physician Directory	4	Link prominently displayed on navigation - photos of physicians
Specialized Services/Centers	3	Yes, but buried under Programs & Services - these are separate websites with separate web addresses and different designs - this specialization allows for much more focused messaging
Support Groups	2	Buried under "Community Calendar" as a pdf download link
Width & Height of Pages	3	585 wide, fixed width, variable height

vi) Southwest General Hospital

Middleburg Heights, OH

swgeneral.com

Overall: Although this site has the basic hospital information, its design and organization make it difficult for the user to perform just about any task.

Interactivity	1	Physician search Poorly executed Flash map of the facilities
Navigation	1	Top navigation changes behavior from home page to sub-pages by having mouse-over menus on sub-pages only - very bad - requires instruction within content pages on how to navigate
Promotion	-	None found
Search	-	None found
Affiliations to Other Organizations	4	Under "Who we are", page explains the relationship with UHHS
Awards	2	Awards displayed in footer, but graphics too small to read and do not link to further informatoin
Classes	1	Page under "Services" > "Education" gives phone number to call for information on classes
Donating & Volunteering	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Volunteering" on navigation, with contact information on the page • No donation information found
Employment	2	"Employment" on navigation - page is a listing with no search or sorting - application is a downloaded pdf - below average supporting information
Health News	-	None found
Health Content	-	None found
Hospital Events	1	"Who we are" > "What's New" leads to a page having links to other pages with little to no information, could also be news
Hospital News	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of headlines on home page • "Who we are" > "What's New" leads to a page having links to other pages with little to no information, could also be events
Hospital Phone Numbers	1	Phone number not displayed on home page - phone numbers found on "Contact Us" page
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	2	"Admissions" on navigation
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	4	"Visitor Info" on navigation, leads to many basic but content-rich pages
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	-	None found
Mission & Vision	-	None found
Physician Directory	1	Unintuitively found under "Medical Staff" in the navigation - search and results are average
Specialized Services/Centers	-	None found
Support Groups	1	Page under "Services" > "Support Groups" gives phone number to call for information on support groups
Width & Height of Pages		750 pixels wide, fixed width, home page 475 high, variable height throughout

vii) WellSpan Health

York, Gettysburg PA

wellspan.org

Overall: Easily the best website examined. Although the visual design is rather flat, the organization and layout provides for a superior user experience. The website benefit from more inter-website promotion in order to avoid pages having only links of other pages, but this is only a nitpick.

Interactivity	4	Online registration Online prescription refilling Online Bill Payment Online donation My Health Page online tools & information storage Online nursery
Navigation	5	Good use of a 3-part navigation - 2 top horizontal & 1 left vertical - the elements in each are logical and intuitive
Promotion	4	2 graphical promotions in top center Nice use of "WellSpan Info Center" on right side of home page Promotional buttons in center
Search	3	Search input box persistent throughout site, cluttered search results, no visual distinction between web pages and pdf files in search results
Affiliations to Other Organizations	-	None found
Awards	2	Found under "WellSpan News" but not promoted on home page
Classes	3	"Class Calendar" on navigation - ability to view in calendar or search
Donating & Volunteering	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Outreach & Giving" on navigation, foundation pages (one for each hospital) display upcoming foundation events & online donation "Jobs & Volunteers" on navigation, leads to information page
Employment	3	"Jobs & Volunteers" on navigation, average job search and online job application
Health News	5	Headlines displayed prominently on home page
Health Content	4	"Health Library" in navigation and "Health Topics" in promotional area - actual content relies heavily on the user making list-box selections for further information, could be better designed - but very robust
Hospital Events	4	"Events" on navigation, page displays upcoming events chronologically
Hospital News	5	Headlines displayed prominently on home page
Hospital Phone Numbers	2	Under the individual hospital pages
Information Addressed Specifically to the Patient	-	No information found
Information Addressed Specifically to the Visitor	4	"Visitor Info" & links on home page promotional area
Links to Employee & Physician Areas	-	None found
Mission & Vision	3	Under "About Us" in navigation
Physician Directory	4	"Find a Physician" on left navigation, large button on home page - very robust physician detail pages
Specialized Services/Centers	5	Excellent integration of Centers into the overall design and architecture
Support Groups	3	Under "Class Calendar" lists groups & contact information

Width & Height of Pages	770 pixels wide, fixed width, page height varies
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d) Discussion & Recommendations

The content of the websites reviewed ran the gamut from basic to robust, and the web interaction and functionality from rudimentary to advanced. But the sites that provided the best user experience were independent of the level of content or interactivity.

The websites that can provide online functionality for many tasks the users needs to perform will hold more value to those users that use the website. The more tasks [hospital project] can place on its website, the more value the website will hold to the user. But the state of the competition, especially local, is not very advanced. So we should be able to match, if not surpass, any functionality on the new website. We would recommend placing as much patient interactivity as possible on the website, partnering with 3rd party vendors as needed.

Sites that offer health content have to balance content robustness with overwhelming the user. We would recommend [hospital project] provide a content offering that can be integrated with the website design and that serves as a solid base for users looking for medical or health information. This content would have frequent links to other areas offering more in-depth content, but would not provide encyclopedic information on every symptom, condition, and procedure.

Navigation and promotion, however, make the primary difference between the successful sites and the sites that fall short. Increased web functionality and content adds value to the users, but their importance can be greatly diminished by incorporation into a design that does not allow the user to easily find what they are seeking.

Having clear and logical navigational labels and organization allow the user to perform their tasks with a minimum of thought, enabling them to feel “in control” of their experience and to come away from the website with positive feelings.

Promotion allows the hospital to surface information and functionality so the user has to go no further than the home page to find what they are seeking. Additionally, promotion can further the goals of the hospital without conflicting with the task-oriented goals of the user. By making the website and hospital seem vibrant, promotion can entice the user to return to the website and encourage a deeper relationship with the hospital.

By combining functionality and content with superior organization and promotion, [hospital project] can surpass its peer group with the new website design.