From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI HEALTH CARE RANKS NATIONALLY IN THREE
SPECIALTIES IN U.S. NEWS' BEST HOSPITALS REPORT
22nd annual rankings also names UMHC one of the top-ranked hospitals in Metro Jackson

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JACKSON, Miss. – University of Mississippi Health Care is nationally recognized in the specialties of cancer, nephrology and orthopedics in U.S. News & World Report's 2011-12 Best Hospitals rankings. UMHC is the only health system in the state ranked nationally for nephrology and orthopedics.

UMHC tied overall for the No. 1 hospital in the Metro Jackson area with St. Dominic Hospital. Covering 94 metro areas in the U.S., the regional hospital rankings complement the national rankings by including hospitals with solid performance nearly at the level of nationally ranked institutions, according to U.S. News.

The regional rankings are aimed primarily at consumers whose care may not demand the special expertise found only at a nationally ranked hospitals or who may not be willing or able to travel long distances for medical care. The U.S. News metro rankings give many such patients and their families more options of hospitals within their community and in their health insurance network, according to U.S. News.

Dr. Scott Stringer, CEO of UMHC, said the rankings are the result of the ongoing investments in quality improvement, facilities, world-class physicians, advanced practitioners, nurses and staff.

"We are particularly gratified to see that these same investments have earned us recognition in three specialty areas as being among the very best in the nation. We look forward to gaining similar recognition for our other deserving and outstanding specialty areas as part of our ongoing efforts to become one of the best academic medical centers in the nation," he said.

Stringer added that the citizens of Mississippi deserve nothing less than the very best health care that an academic medical center can uniquely provide without leaving their home state, and these same efforts create a great environment to educate future health care professionals.

The latest rankings showcase 720 hospitals out of about 5,000 hospitals nationwide. Each is ranked among the country's top hospitals in at least one medical specialty and/or ranked among the best hospitals in its metro area.

"These are hospitals we call 'high performers.' They are fully capable of giving most patients first-rate care, even if they have serious conditions or need demanding procedures," said Avery Comarow, the magazine's health rankings editor, in a release. "Almost every major metro area has at least one of these hospitals."

Hard numbers stand behind the rankings in most specialties—death rates, patient safety, procedure volume and other objective data. Responses to a national survey, in which physicians were asked to name hospitals they consider best in their specialty for the toughest cases, also were factored in.

The rankings cover 16 medical specialties and all 94 metro areas that have at least 500,000 residents and at least one hospital that performed well enough to be ranked.

The rankings, annually published by U.S. News for the past 22 years, are available online at www.usnews.com/besthospitals and will also be featured in the *U.S. News Best Hospitals* guidebook.

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The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. University of Mississippi Health Care represents the clinical programs of the Medical Center and includes University Hospitals and Health System and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. UMMC encompasses five health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related professions, dentistry and graduate studies, as well as the site where University of Mississippi pharmacy students do their clinical training. The Medical Center's threefold mission is to educate tomorrow's health-care professionals, conduct innovative research to improve human health, and to provide the highest quality care available to the state's citizens. A major goal of the Medical Center is the improvement of the health of Mississippians and the elimination of health disparities. For more information, contact the Division of Public Affairs at 601-984-1100 or visit us on the Web at http://publicaffairs.umc.edu/