

What Roles Do Teaching Hospitals Fulfill?

Educating Future Physicians, Discovering Tomorrow's Cures, and Providing Community Care

In addition to serving as the training ground for the vast majority of new physicians and other health professionals each year, AAMC-member teaching hospitals* fill other significant roles, as well. They are where medical knowledge continuously evolves and new cures and treatments are found. They are where critical community services, such as trauma and burn centers, always stand ready. And they are a vital part of America's safety net, providing care to millions of the nation's uninsured.

Educating Future Physicians

Every year, more than 16,000 students earn an M.D. from an AAMC-member medical school—the first phase of the journey to full medical licensure and board certification—and begin the graduate stage of medical education: residency. Through residency programs, which range in length from three to more than eight years, newly graduated physicians gain the clinical experience and knowledge they need to become effective and highly qualified doctors.

Discovering Tomorrow's Cures

As key centers of research, AAMC-member teaching hospitals are responsible for critical medical breakthroughs. From new approaches in prevention and diagnosis to successful treatments and cures, the advances pioneered at these institutions dramatically improve the health of our nation. Included among these advances are the:

- Development of coronary angioplasty
- First pediatric trauma center
- First geriatric research and training center
- First successful double-lung transplant
- Development of artificial skin made from living human cells
- First human images with an MRI

For more "firsts," see box at right.

Medical Firsts

Among the many advances pioneered at America's medical schools and teaching hospitals are the:

- First live polio vaccine
- First successful pancreas transplant
- First successful bone marrow transplant
- First intensive care unit for newborns
- First human gene therapy for cystic fibrosis
- First adult human heart transplant in the United States
- First successful liver transplant
- First successful pediatric heart transplant
- First successful surgery on a fetus in utero
- First to discover that adult heart diseases begin in childhood
- First to discover the genetic markers that increase risk of multiple myeloma, a deadly cancer of the blood

For a complete listing, please visit
www.aamc.org/newsroom/presskits/teachinghospitals.htm

Providing Community Care

Patient Care

These institutions also provide a disproportionate share of services.

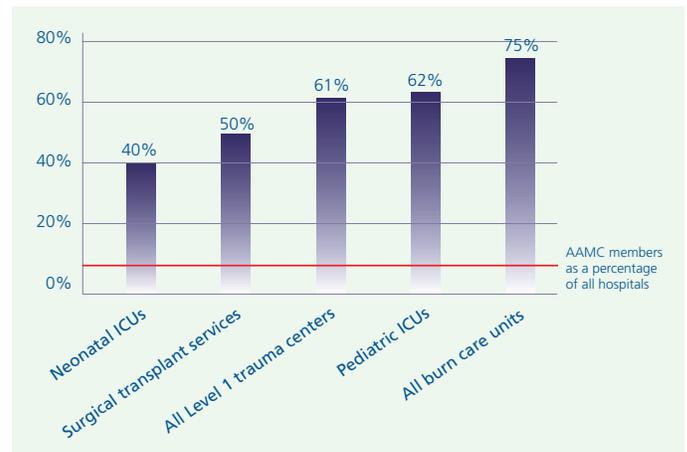
Comprising only 6 percent of all hospitals, AAMC-member teaching hospitals and their faculty physicians account for 20 percent or more of all hospital care in this country and receive more than 40 percent of all transferred patients whose illnesses or injuries require a sophisticated level of technology and expertise not available at a community hospital.

AAMC-member teaching hospitals provide 41 percent of all hospital charity care and are the sites for approximately 25 percent of all Medicaid hospitalizations.

Intensive and Specialized Services

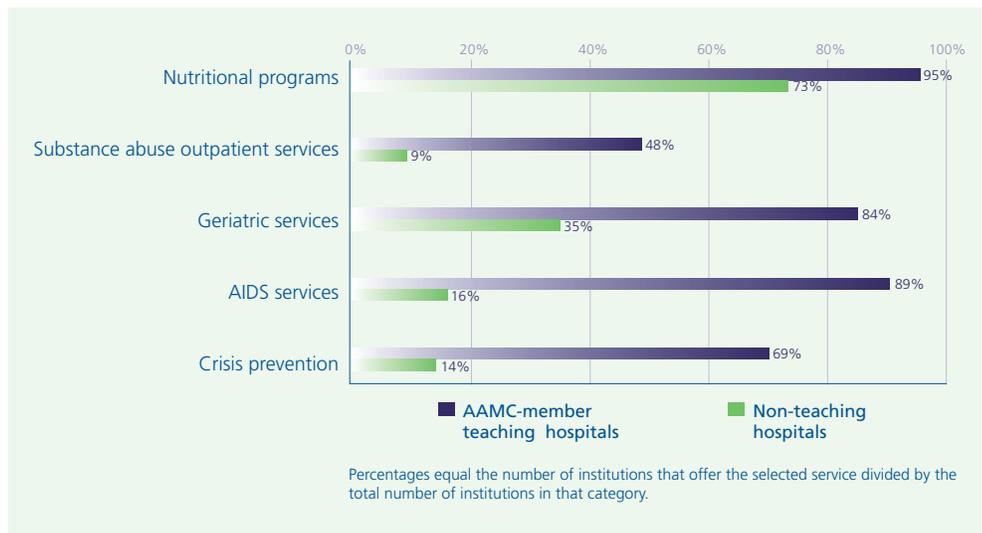
The disparity is even more dramatic when considering intensive and critical services, with these hospitals operating:

- 40 percent of neonatal ICUs;
- 50 percent of surgical transplant services;
- 61 percent of all Level 1 regional trauma centers;
- 62 percent of pediatric ICUs; and
- 75 percent of all burn care units.



Operating Community Programs

AAMC-member teaching hospitals are more likely than nonteaching hospitals to reach out to the communities they serve by offering various community programs. For example, 89 percent of AAMC-member teaching hospitals offer AIDS services compared to 16 percent of nonteaching hospitals.



In summary, AAMC-member teaching hospitals create a synergistic environment in which cutting-edge clinical care is delivered, significant medical advances are made, and the next generation of physicians is trained.

*AAMC-member teaching hospitals are members of the Council of Teaching Hospitals and Health Systems (COTH). Typically, each COTH member sponsors, or participates significantly in, at least four approved, active residency programs—at least two of which should be in medicine, surgery, obstetrics/gynecology, pediatrics, family practice, or psychiatry.