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How local hospitals compare on leading cause of death

Sacramento Business Journal - by [Kathy Robertson](#), Staff writer

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The leading cause of hospital death isn't heart failure or trauma. It's sepsis, a condition resulting from the body's response to a serious bacterial infection. If not diagnosed early and treated quickly, it can lead to organ failure and death.

Sepsis affects an estimated 750,000 people nationwide at an estimated treatment cost of \$17 billion a year.

Nearly 3 percent of Sacramento-area hospital patients were diagnosed with sepsis in 2009, the latest year for which data are available. Smaller hospitals generally had higher rates.

Following are rates calculated by dividing the number of patients with sepsis by the total number of discharges (in parentheses).

- Sutter Auburn Faith (4,127): **5.8%**
- Mercy—Folsom (5,625): **5.6%**
- Mercy San Juan (20,614): **4.9%**
- Sutter General (12,342): **4.6%**
- Marshall (6,465): **4.3%**
- Woodland Memorial (4,792): **3.7%**
- Methodist (10,171): **3.5%**

- Sutter Davis (4,709): **3.0%**
- Kaiser—Sacramento/Roseville (35,955): **2.9%**
- Mercy General (21,286): **2.5%**
- Kaiser—South Sacramento (14,098): **2.4%**
- Sutter Roseville (18,972): **2.2%**
- UC Davis (30,669): **1.9%**
- Sutter Memorial (22,471): **1.1%**
- Total (212,296): **2.9%**

Source: Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, 2009

In a concerted effort to fight sepsis, up to 150 nurses, doctors and other caregivers from local hospitals will get state-of-the-art sepsis training over a three-week period that started July 25.

The program is part of a three-year, \$6 million statewide initiative to improve patient safety and reduce health care costs through consistent use of best medical practices. The free training includes online instruction and three hours of hands-on training with a mannequin that breathes, talks and responds.

Funded by [Anthem Blue Cross](#), training is provided by Denver-based [Medical Simulation Corp.](#) in partnership with three regional hospital associations and the National Health Foundation.

The foundation distributes the money and manages the data. Hospital associations handle logistics and round up folks for the training.

The idea is to teach nurses and doctors to recognize early signs of sepsis so they will alert others to the condition, said **Scott Seamons**, regional vice president for the [Hospital Council of Northern and Central California](#).

"We expect it to save lives," he said.

This is a condensed version of a story [appearing in this week's Sacramento Business Journal](#).

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Kathy Robertson covers health care, labor/workplace issues, law, immigration, medical technology and biotechnology



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