

TO MEDIA:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EXCELA HEALTH NAMED ONE OF THE NATION'S BEST HOSPITALS
FOR BARIATRIC SURGERY BY LEAPFROG GROUP AND MONEY
MAGAZINE**

***Recognition Affirms System's Adherence To Best Practices
For Quality, Safety in Weight Management Surgery***

GREENSBURG, PA, February 16, 2023 ... Excela Health continues to be recognized as a national leader, this time in the area of weight management surgery. Excela Westmoreland Hospital is among the nation's "Best Hospitals for Bariatric Surgery" as identified by The Leapfrog Group and *Money Magazine*. In this first-ever [list](#), 101 hospitals were lauded for excellence in performing "one of the most difficult surgeries." Excela Westmoreland is the only hospital in southwestern Pennsylvania, and one of just seven across the Commonwealth to make the list.

"We are pleased to be recognized for what we do each day to ensure a positive outcome for patients. At Westmoreland Health, we offer both surgical and non-surgical options to help patients meet their goals," noted Excela Health surgeon Mark Zelkovic, MD, FACS. "Bariatric surgery is life-altering, and it is critical that patients pursue a weight management path in which they can succeed. The impact on a variety of weight-related conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and joint deterioration, to

name a few, is significant. This distinction further affirms our expertise in serving the needs of our community in a safe and effective manner.”

To create the list, the Leapfrog Group, a nonprofit watchdog organization that serves as a voice for health care consumers and purchasers, partnered with *Money* to analyze data submitted to the 2022 Leapfrog Hospital Survey, which was completed by more than 2,200 hospitals last year. To be included in the list, eligible hospitals had to carry an A or B letter grade on the 2022 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade assessment. In addition, they were required to meet criteria specific to bariatric surgery, which included adequate surgical volumes to maintain competency in what Leapfrog dubbed a high-risk procedure; risk-benefit analysis for each patient; adherence to the hospital’s safe surgery checklist; and lower than expected hospital-acquired infections.

Not only did Excelsa Westmoreland have an A hospital safety letter grade in the most recent Leapfrog grading period, Westmoreland has maintained the A grade for five consecutive grading periods.

“Bariatric surgery is a complex procedure that over half a million people undergo annually across the world. Certain hospitals are safer than others for this procedure, and thanks to *Money*, patients have important data to make an informed decision,” said Leapfrog president and CEO Leah Binder.

“This new list features one-of-a-kind selections that gives readers an excellent look at one of the most difficult surgeries to perform,” added *Money*’s Executive Editor Mike Ayers.

Bariatric surgery is one component of a comprehensive program within the Excelsa Health Weight Management Center. The Center has been designated a MBSAQIP Accredited Center – Comprehensive Center with Obesity Medicine Qualifications. Evidence-based weight-loss methods are medically supervised to provide the safest, most effective weight loss solution available. Education and counseling occur in both group and individual settings for nutrition, behavior modification, emotional readiness and fitness.

Earlier this year, Excelsa Westmoreland also earned recognition as one of the Best Hospitals for Maternity Care in America by Money powered by The Leapfrog Group.

About The Leapfrog Group

Founded in 2000 by large employers and other purchasers, [The Leapfrog Group](#) is a national nonprofit organization driving a movement for giant leaps for patient safety. The flagship [Leapfrog Hospital Survey](#) and new [Leapfrog Ambulatory Surgery Center \(ASC\) Survey](#) collect and [transparently report](#) hospital and ASC performance, empowering purchasers to find the highest-value care and giving consumers the lifesaving information they need to make informed decisions. The [Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade](#), Leapfrog's other main initiative, assigns letter grades to hospitals based on their record of patient safety, helping consumers protect themselves and their families from errors, injuries, accidents and infections.

About Money

Money was founded in 1972 as a print magazine that helped everyday people live richer lives by learning personal finance strategies that improved their bottom line. Over that time their mission has evolved to guide people to financial victories through up-to-date information, education, and tools. With the rising costs of healthcare, Money sees the direct correlation between quality of care and the lessened financial impact on the consumer, the better the care, the lower the overall, long-term costs.