

News Release

PENNSSTATE



Milton S. Hershey Medical Center
College of Medicine

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**CAPITAL BLUE CROSS AND THE BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD ASSOCIATION NAME
PENN STATE HERSHEY MEDICAL CENTER BLUE DISTINCTION CENTER
FOR BARIATRIC SURGERY**

Medical Center recognized nationally for bariatric surgical care and outcomes

HERSHEY, PA—Capital BlueCross, in partnership with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, named Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center a Blue Distinction Center for Bariatric Surgery for demonstrating reliability in delivering bariatric surgical care and better overall outcomes for patients. To date, only five facilities in the region have been named to the list of designated hospitals.

A national program launched by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, Blue Distinction Centers for Bariatric Surgery have well integrated programs that help promote patient safety and provide cross-functional team support to bariatric surgery patients. The Blue Distinction program has two goals: to engage consumers to enable more informed health care decisions and to collaborate with providers to improve quality outcomes and affordability.

“At Capital BlueCross, we are focused on providing our members with access to the highest quality medical care,” said Anita Smith, president and chief executive officer, Capital BlueCross. “Penn State Hershey Medical Center’s Surgical Weight Loss Program met or exceeded stringent criteria established by expert physician panels, surgeons, behaviorists and nutritionists—distinguishing the program as one of the leaders in bariatric surgical care. Capital BlueCross is pleased to join with the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in designating Penn State Hershey Medical Center as a Blue Distinction Center for Bariatric Surgery.”

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Selection criteria evaluate volume, structure, process and outcome measures. An ongoing certification process is in place to ensure that participating institutions continue to meet quality criteria—making them more likely to deliver better overall outcomes and better value for Blue Plans’ members and employers.

“This national recognition validates the collaborative efforts and combined expertise of our team,” said Robert Cooney, M.D., chief, division of general surgery, Penn State Hershey Medical Center; professor of surgery, Penn State College of Medicine. “We are committed to providing advanced care and the resources that our patients need—before, during and after surgery—to help achieve healthy weight loss, improve quality of life, and make the experience as rewarding as possible.”

The comprehensive surgical weight loss program at Penn State Hershey Medical Center was started in 1979, and offers a multidisciplinary approach, including nutritional counseling, medical evaluation, psychiatric evaluation, and weight loss surgery for patients with clinically severe obesity. For more information about the Penn State Surgical Weight Loss Program, visit <http://www.pennstatesurgicalweightloss.com>.

Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center

Founded in 1963 through a gift from The Milton S. Hershey Foundation, Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center is one of the leading teaching and research hospitals in the country. The 499-bed Medical Center is a provider of high-level, patient-focused medical care. Annually the Medical Center admits more than 26,000 patients, accepts more than 766,000 outpatient visits, receives nearly 48,000 patients for emergency room visits and performs more than 23,000 surgical procedures. The Medical Center campus also includes Penn State College of Medicine (Penn State University’s medical school), Penn State Cancer Institute, and Penn State Children’s Hospital—the region’s only children’s hospital.

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