

ILLINOIS: REPORT CARD TALKING POINTS

OVERALL GRADE: D
#45 IN THE NATION

Category:	Grade:	National Rank:
Access To Emergency Care	D	24
Quality & Patient Safety Environment	C+	22
Medical Liability Environment	F	50
Public Health & Injury Prevention	D+	29
Disaster Preparedness	F	43

- Illinois' drop from 27th place in the country in 2009 to 45th place today for its support for emergency care is largely due to major setbacks in its already challenging Medical Liability Environment and its failure to keep pace with other states in Disaster Preparedness.
- Illinois' Medical Liability Environment is toxic for both providers and patients, turning physicians and patients into adversaries rather than allies.
- Although Illinois improved its ranking for Access to Emergency Care, it could improve its grade by increasing its Medicaid reimbursement rates, which are currently one of the lowest in the country for office visits.

Medical Liability Environment:

Talking point: Without meaningful medical liability reform, Illinois runs the risk of losing its most qualified doctors and medical professionals to states where there is more protection against frivolous lawsuits.

Data point: Illinois has been rated a “judicial hellhole” because it has fallen so far behind other states in providing fair and equitable protections for physicians, such as caps on non-economic damages.

- Solutions: 1. Policymakers must reverse the trends of the past 5 years, starting with something as basic as making a physician's apology inadmissible in court as evidence of wrongdoing. 2. To ease the shortage of primary care physicians in Illinois, it must reduce their insurance premiums, which are currently second highest in the country.

Public Health & Injury Prevention:

Talking point: Emergency physicians save one life at a time, while investment in public health and injury prevention saves thousands.

Data point: Illinois' D+ for Public Health & Injury Prevention reflects the state's low rates of immunization and relatively high rate of binge drinking.

- Solution: Illinois' policymakers must commit to educating and combating causes of chronic disease and illness, particularly among people who are not receiving adequate preventive care.

Disaster Preparedness

Talking point: Policymakers must focus on raising Illinois' disaster preparedness efforts to the gold standard set by Boston after the Marathon bombing.

Data point: Illinois dropped from 8th place to 43rd for Disaster Preparedness, because it did not keep pace with other states and because legislation proposed to enhance immunity for health care responders during a disaster failed in the state legislature.

- Solution: Improving liability protections for health care workers in a disaster would encourage more physicians, nurses and behavioral health professionals to register in the Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals.