

# Why did my Percent Top Box increase but my Percentile Ranking decrease?

To establish a percentile ranking, PRC compares your data to our national normative database, which is compiled on an annual basis. Requirements to achieve the 50th or 90th percentile this year are usually different than last year and will likely be different next year. As hospitals across the country continue to improve, your hospital may need to increase its score just to *maintain* the ranking it had in a previous year. For example, to achieve the 90th percentile for the Overall Quality of Care question in the Inpatient database in 2014, a hospital would have needed 71.1% of patients to rate it as “Excellent.” In 2005, only 63.1% of patients needed to respond “Excellent” to reach the 90th percentile. A hospital that wanted to maintain a score at or above the 90th percentile in 2014 would have needed to increase its score by at least the same rate as the PRC norm increased.

Most of the comparative groups continue to improve, meaning that it takes more patients responding “Excellent” to achieve a high ranking. From 2009 to 2018, PRC’s normative databases saw increases in every general survey area. From year to year, however, the survey areas may experience dips. In the forthcoming tables, you can see how the requirements for the 50th and 90th percentiles have changed over time.

Looking at this first table for 50th percentile requirements for the Overall Quality of Care (OQC) question, you’ll notice that a hospital needed 61.2% of Outpatients saying “Excellent” in 2009 to be at the 50th percentile. This hospital would need to improve its percent excellent score by at least 2.8 Percent Excellent by 2010 to remain at or above the 50th percentile because in 2010, the requirement had increased to 64 Percent Excellent. A hospital that only improved 2% in this time frame would have seen their ranking fall below the 50th percentile. So while this hospital improved the Percent Excellent, they did not improve *enough* to keep up with the database and thus experienced a decrease in Percentile Ranking.

## Overall Quality of Care (OQC) 50th Percentile Requirements

Norm Group	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Difference between 2009 and 2018
Inpatient	57.7	58.8	60.2	59.2	61.6	61.1	61.9	62.1	61.8	61.4	3.7
Outpatient	61.2	64	63.5	63.5	64.9	66.1	66.7	66.8	67.4	67.4	6.2
Outpatient Surgery	69.1	70.7	71.5	71.5	72	72	73	73.1	73.5	74.9	5.8
Emergency Services	48.9	49.5	51	50	49	50.2	51.4	50.5	51.3	51.5	2.6

Numbers shown are Percent Excellent  
 Numbers in **RED** are LOWER than the previous year.  
 Number in **Green** are HIGHER than the previous year.



If we look at this second table for 90th percentile requirements for the OQC question, we can see another peculiarity in play. If a hospital surveying their inpatients in 2017 received 72.1 Percent Excellent, that hospital would achieve the 90th percentile. If, in 2018, their score fell to 70.6 Percent Excellent, they would still be at or above the 90th percentile because the requirements lowered that year.

### Overall Quality of Care (OQC) 50th Percentile Requirements

*Difference  
between  
2009 and  
2018*

Norm Group	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Inpatient	67.2	68.3	70.2	70.3	71.9	71.1	72.7	71.8	72.1	70.6	3.4
Outpatient	72.9	72.3	73.4	72.7	73.6	74.7	75.6	74.7	75.4	76.2	3.3
Outpatient Surgery	78.4	78.9	79.9	81	80.5	81.6	82	82	82.7	83.2	4.8
Emergency Services	58.5	59.8	61.1	61.6	61.5	61.7	62.2	61.6	61.8	61.5	3

*Numbers shown are Percent Excellent.*

*Number in **RED** are LOWER than the previous year.*

*Numbers in **Green** are HIGHER than the previous year.*

This is one of the reasons PRC encourages you to focus on Percent Excellent, which you and your staff can directly influence. While you are unable to predict peculiarities in the norms and increases in the market overall, you are able to work day by day committing more efforts to give patients excellent experiences.

Do not be discouraged when you have an increase in your score but a decrease in your ranking in a given year. PRC's experience has found that hospitals or departments that continually achieve incremental increases in Percent Excellent over time will typically move in the rankings in the long run, even though the short run may show a decrease in those rankings.

