A Comparison Between Objective and Publicly Rated Pediatric Neurosurgeon Online Physician Ratings

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Disclosures

We have no disclosures
Online physician ratings are becoming more influential in this increasingly modern age.

Binary Fountain survey: 950/1000 Americans surveyed consulted online publicly rated online physician ratings to choose their provider.

Castle Connolly is a private research firm that compiles a list of “Top Doctors” using an objective rating system based on:

- Peer nominations
- Board certifications
- Appointments
- Malpractice history
Methods

The list of board-certified pediatric neurosurgeons was pulled from the American Board of Pediatric Neurological Surgery (ABPNS) website and were categorized based on:

- Publicly rated online physician ratings:
  - Vitals.com
  - Web-MD.com
  - HealthGrade.com (HG)

- Objective physician ratings:
  - Castle Connolly Top Doctor status

The average public ratings of Castle Connolly Top Doctors was compared to their colleagues that were not listed on the firm’s ranking system using a two-tailed T-test.
Castle Connolly Top Doctor status and publicly rated online physician rating data were gathered from 237 board-certified pediatric neurosurgeons from the ABNPS website.

- 74 Castle Connolly Top Doctors
- 218 listed on Vitals.com
- 204 listed on WebMD.com
- 137 listed on HealthGrade.com

Each online physician rating website used a 0.0-5.0 scale.

Average number of public reviewers:
- Castle Connolly: 19.3 ± 13
- Non-Castle Connolly: 15.5 ± 13
Results – Objective vs Public Physician Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vitals Averages</th>
<th>WebMd Averages</th>
<th>HealthGrade Averages</th>
<th>Overall Averages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>4.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Castle Connolly Rated | Non-Castle Connolly Rated
### Results – Academic vs Private Pediatric Neurosurgeons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABPNS Pediatric Neurosurgeons</th>
<th>Academic Average</th>
<th>Private Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Pediatric Neurosurgeons</td>
<td>4.27 ± 0.56</td>
<td>4.32 ± 0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 180</td>
<td>n = 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Connolly</td>
<td>4.36 ± 0.48</td>
<td>4.44 ± 0.49</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 63</td>
<td>n = 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Castle Connolly</td>
<td>4.23 ± 0.59</td>
<td>4.34 ± 0.60</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>n = 117</td>
<td>n = 25</td>
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</tbody>
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Discussion

- Pediatric neurosurgeons listed on the ABPNS website that were rated as Castle Connolly Top Doctors had a significantly higher average publicly rated online physician rating when compared to their colleagues that were not listed as “Top Doctors” (p = 0.03)
- Objective physician ratings agree with public online physician ratings from the sources used in this study
- Further investigations could involve all board-certified neurosurgeons to examine if the agreement between objective and public physician ratings continues to hold true
Online physician ratings have become increasingly utilized during the process of provider selection.

Many public physician ratings demonstrate questionable validity as evaluations are often determined by public survey.

Comparison using Castle Connolly “Top Doctor Status” as an objective measure demonstrates statistical significance in difference of Pediatric Neurosurgeon ratings on publicly determined physician ratings.

Findings suggest that ABPNS certified neurosurgeons that are rated as a Castle Connolly “Top Doctor” hold higher public ratings.