Calvert Memorial Hospital has been named one of the nation’s “Most Wired” by the American Hospital Association. It is one of only six hospitals in Maryland and 375 nationwide to be recognized. The award is given to those healthcare organizations that have adopted a broad level of information technology that enhances quality care, improves patient safety and promotes better care coordination.

Ed Grogan, chief information officer at CMH said the health system is honored to be among the Most Wired. “We credit the foresight and vision of our board of directors who have made a significant investment in information technology.” The hospital has spent over $15 million in the past decade on modernizing and upgrading its information systems.

He went on to add, “We are always looking for ways to better coordinate and improve the quality of care our patients receive. We believe that leading the way in health information technology is just one more way we can provide better service.”

According to Grogan, CMH was the first hospital in Maryland to implement critical care telemedicine. The system, allows intensive care physicians and veteran critical care nurses at a remote center to monitor crucial indicators such as blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen levels, respiratory rate and lab results for early warning signs and intervene proactively, when needed.

He said the advanced technology has contributed to lower mortality and readmission rates. Calvert Memorial had the lowest risk-adjusted readmission rate of all Maryland hospitals from January –April 2014 at 7.25 percent. The hospital also had the second lowest risk-adjusted mortality rate for the same period at 0.81 percent.

The Prince Frederick facility was also the first in its region to implement barcode technology for positive patient identification when administering medications and collecting specimens. Grogan said this has virtually eliminated specimen mislabeling errors.

Last fall, CMH implemented computerized physician order entry (CPOE) hospital wide. It replaces paper orders and has resulted in a 41 percent reduction in medication errors. It also includes clinical decision support such as reminders and evidence-based research to assist physicians in clinical decisions.

Additionally, Calvert Memorial was a leader in implementing a community health information exchange and is one of only a few healthcare organizations in the state which hosts electronic health records for independent physician practices.

The Calvert Health Information Exchange (C-HIE), which connects participating practices with the hospital, three outpatient labs and two imaging centers, increases the level of information available to physicians which they can use in clinical decision-making, resulting in a higher level of care, better patient outcomes and reduced duplicative testing.

In July, the hospital launched its new online patient portal, called “My CMH Care,” that offers patients the convenience of accessing their information online, through the hospital website at www.calverthospital.org, at any time from almost anywhere.

Through the portal, patients who have been hospitalized will be able to review, download, print and transmit essential medical information, such as lab and radiology results, discharge instructions, prescribed medications and scheduled appointments for reference.