

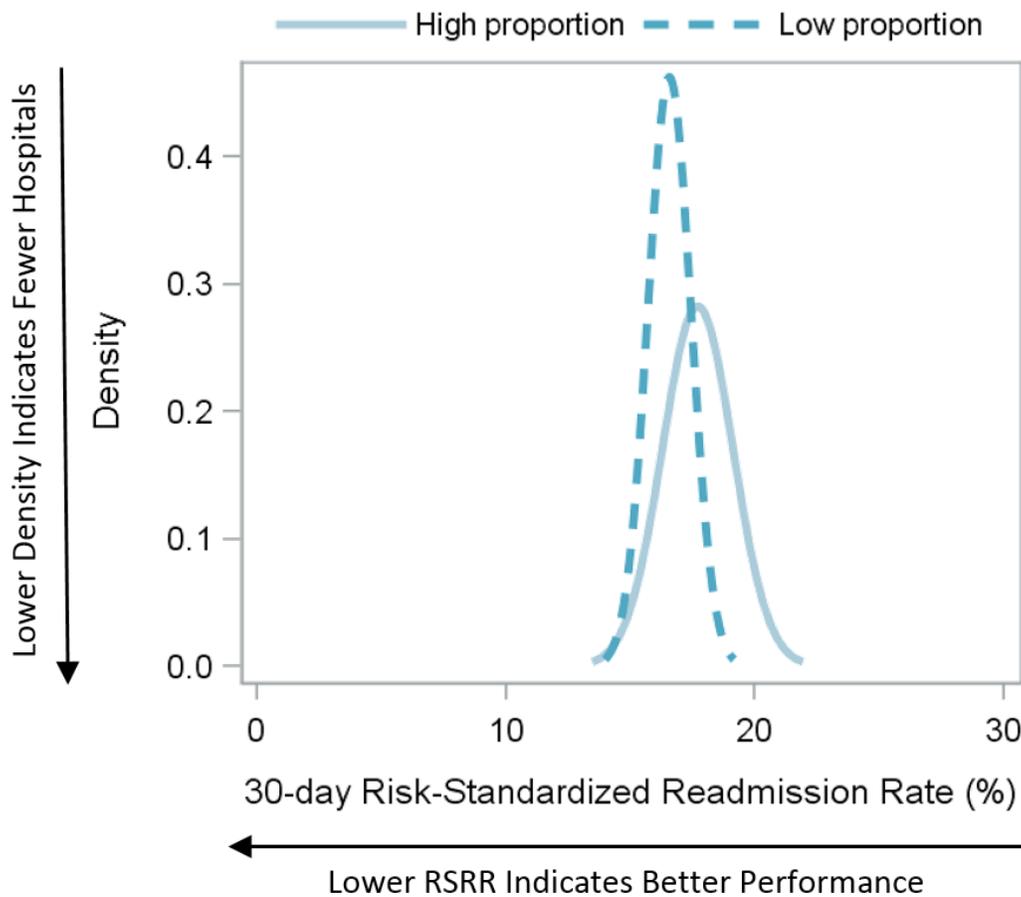
► **Performance on the pneumonia readmission measure:** Hospitals that serve high and low proportions of African-American patients.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) evaluates hospital performance in relation to the proportion of African-American patients served in order to monitor patterns, changes, and potential unintended consequences in the measure results. This information allows CMS to better understand the current state of care within U.S. hospitals.

The pneumonia readmission measure includes Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) beneficiaries aged 65 or older and assesses the occurrence of unplanned readmission for any cause within 30 days after discharge from a hospitalization for pneumonia [1].

CMS began publicly reporting 30-day risk-standardized readmission rates (RSRRs) following hospitalizations for pneumonia in 2009 [2]. Publicly reported measure results are updated annually on the [Hospital Compare](#) website. The pneumonia readmission measure has been included in the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program (HRRP) since 2012 [3].

FIGURE I. Distributions of pneumonia RSRRs (%) for hospitals with low and high proportions of African-American patients, July 2013-June 2016.



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Variation in RSRRs reflects differences in performance among hospitals; lower RSRRs suggest better quality and higher RSRRs suggest worse quality. To understand how caring for African-American patients might impact a hospital's RSRR, we examined RSRRs among hospitals with high and low proportions of African-American patients. We compared the pneumonia RSRRs for the 806 hospitals with 0% African-American Medicare FFS patients to the 420 hospitals with $\geq 21.1\%$ African-American Medicare FFS patients for the July 2013 – June 2016 reporting period. We defined hospitals with low and high proportions of African-American patients as those that fall within the lowest and highest deciles of all hospitals with 25 or more qualifying discharges (N= 4,193). The proportion of African-American Medicare FFS patients for each hospital was determined using the Medicare Part A Inpatient Claims from 2015. All hospitals with 0% African-American patients were included in the lowest decile. To ensure accurate assessment of each hospital, the pneumonia readmission measure uses a statistical model to adjust for key differences in patient risk factors that are clinically relevant and that have a strong relationship with the readmission outcome [1].

TABLE I. Distributions of pneumonia RSRRs (%) for hospitals with low and high proportions of African-American patients, July 2013-June 2016.

	Pneumonia RSRR (%)	
	Hospitals with low proportions (0%) of African-American patients n = 806	Hospitals with high proportions ($\geq 21.1\%$) of African-American patients n = 420
Maximum	19.8	23.1
90%	17.6	19.7
75%	17.1	18.5
Median (50%)	16.6	17.6
25%	16.0	16.7
10%	15.5	16.1
Minimum	13.4	14.2

The median pneumonia RSRR for hospitals with low proportions of African-American patients was 16.6% (interquartile range [IQR]: 16.0%- 17.1%; Figure 1 and Table 1). The median pneumonia RSRR for hospitals with high proportions of African-American patients was 17.6% (IQR: 16.7%- 18.5%; Figure 1 and Table 1).

Hospitals with low proportions of African-American patients had a median pneumonia RSRR that was 1.0 percentage point lower than hospitals with high proportions.

1. Jaymie Simoes, Jacqueline N. Grady, Jo DeBuhr, et al. 2017 Condition-Specific Measures Updates and Specifications Report Hospital-Level 30-Day Risk-Standardized Readmission Measures: Acute Myocardial Infarction – Version 10.0 Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease – Version 6.0 Heart Failure – Version 10.0 Pneumonia – Version 10.0 Stroke – Version 6.0. <https://www.qualitynet.org/dcs/ContentServer?c=Page&pagename=QnetPublic%2FPage%2FQnetTier4&cid=1219069855841>. Available as of April 4, 2017.

2. Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting (IQR) Program Overview. QualityNet website. <https://www.qualitynet.org/dcs/ContentServer?c=Page&pagename=QnetPublic%2FPage%2FQnetTier2&cid=1138115987129>. Accessed March 1, 2017.

3. Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program Overview. QualityNet website. <https://www.qualitynet.org/dcs/ContentServer?c=Page&pagename=QnetPublic%2FPage%2FQnetTier2&cid=1228772412458>. Accessed March 1, 2017.