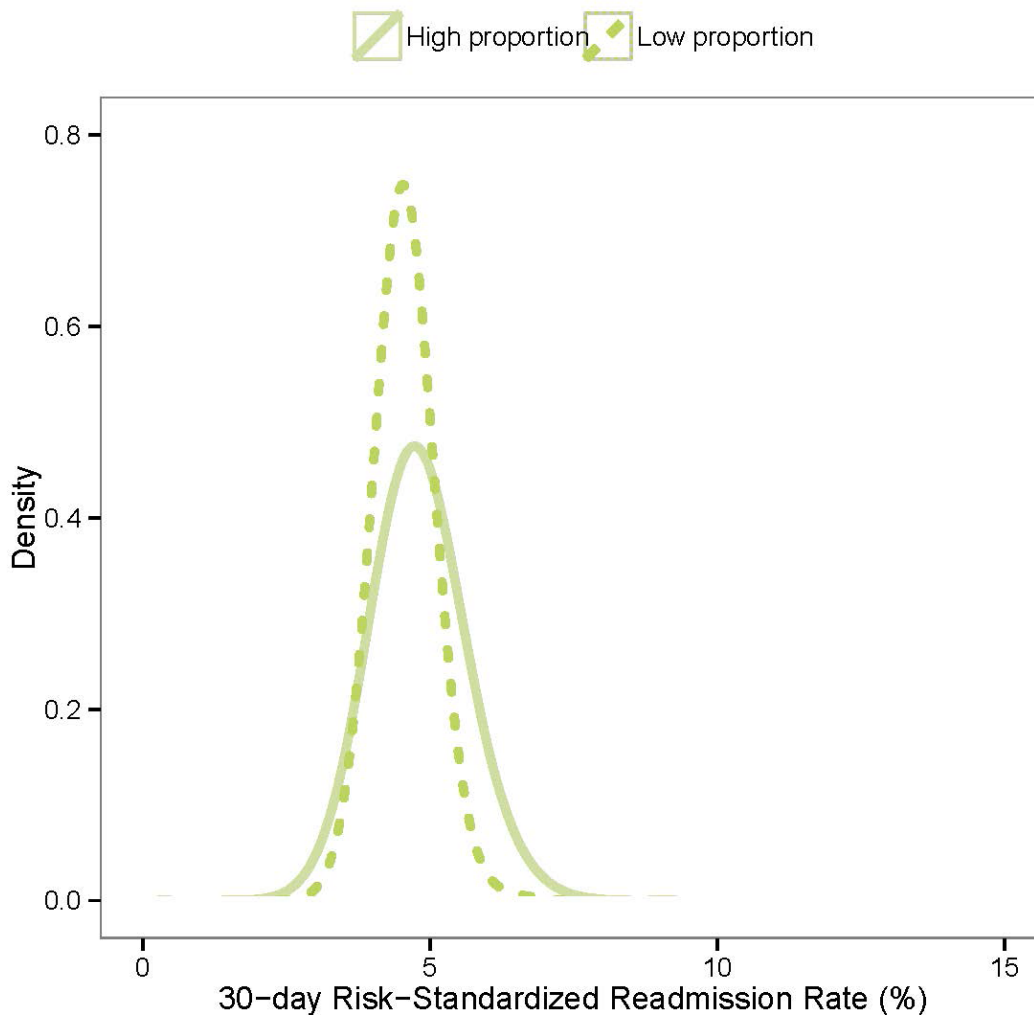


► **Performance on the elective primary total hip arthroplasty and/or total knee arthroplasty readmission measure:** Hospitals that serve high and low proportions of African-American patients.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) periodically investigates select hospital practices that may impact a hospital's performance on the following readmission measure: hospital-level 30-day risk-standardized readmission rate (RSRR) following elective primary total hip arthroplasty (THA) and/or total knee arthroplasty (TKA) [1]. The THA/TKA 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 the date of discharge from hospitalization for THA/TKA [2]. The THA/TKA readmission measure has been publicly reported on [Hospital Compare](#) since 2013 and has been included in the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program (HRRP) since Fiscal Year 2015 [3, 4].

FIGURE I. Distributions of THA/TKA RSRRs (%) for hospitals with the lowest and highest proportions of African-American patients, July 2012-June 2015.



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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 THA/TKA RSRRs for the 280 hospitals with the lowest overall proportion of African-American Medicare FFS patients (0% of a hospital's Medicare FFS patients) to the 280 hospitals with the highest proportion of African-American Medicare FFS patients ($\geq 19.1\%$ of a hospital's Medicare FFS patients) for the July 2012 – June 2015 reporting period. We defined hospitals with the lowest and highest proportions of African-American patients as those that fall within the lowest and highest deciles of all hospitals with 25 or more qualifying admissions. The proportion of African-American Medicare FFS patients for each hospital was determined using the Medicare Part A Inpatient Claims from 2014. All hospitals with 0% African-American patients were included in the lowest decile. To ensure accurate assessment of each hospital, the THA/TKA 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 [2].

TABLE I. Distributions of THA/TKA arthroplasty RSRRs (%) for hospitals with the lowest and highest proportions of African-American patients, July 2012-June 2015.

	THA/TKA RSRR (%)	
	Lowest proportion (0%) African-American patients; n=280	Highest proportion ($\geq 19.1\%$) African-American patients; n=280
Maximum	6.5	6.8
90%	5.0	5.6
75%	4.8	5.1
Median (50%)	4.5	4.7
25%	4.3	4.4
10%	4.1	4.2
Minimum	3.3	3.4

The median THA/TKA RSRR for hospitals with the lowest proportion of African-American patients was 4.5% (interquartile range [IQR]: 4.3%-4.8%; Figure 1 and Table 1). The median THA/TKA RSRR for hospitals with the highest proportion of African-American patients was 4.7% (IQR: 4.4%-5.1%; Figure 1 and Table 1).

Hospitals with the lowest proportion of African-American patients had a median THA/TKA RSRR that was 0.2 percentage points lower than hospitals with the highest proportion.

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