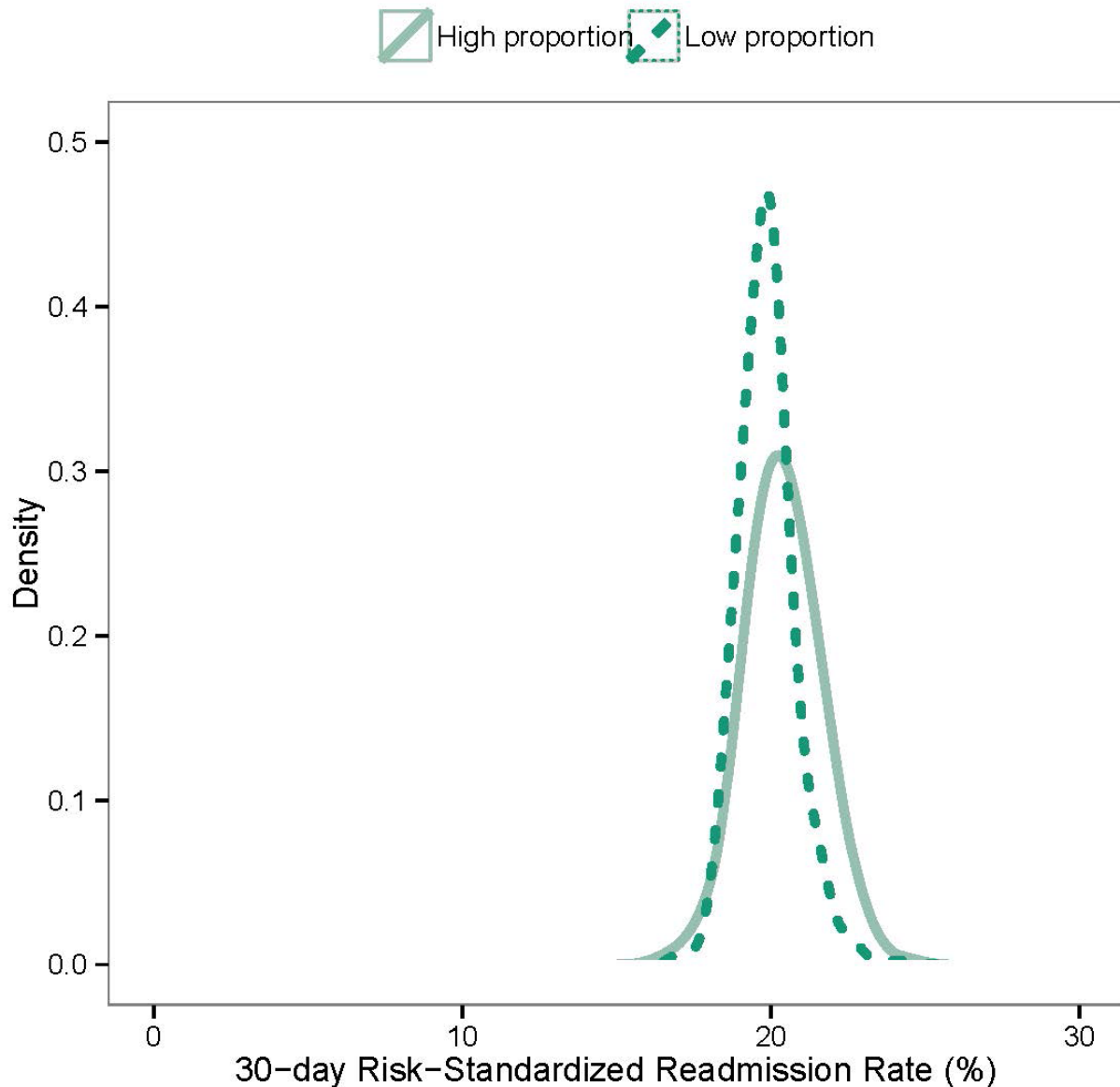


SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC STATUS

► **Performance on the chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) 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 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) [1]. The COPD 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 COPD [2]. The COPD readmission measure has been publicly reported on [Hospital Compare](#) since 2014 and has been included in the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program (HRRP) since Fiscal Year 2015 [3,4].

FIGURE I. Distributions of COPD 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 stroke RSRRs for the 521 hospitals with the lowest overall proportion of African-American Medicare FFS patients (0% of a hospital's Medicare FFS patients) to the 378 hospitals with the highest proportion of African-American Medicare FFS patients ($\geq 22.8\%$ 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 COPD 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 COPD RSRRs (%) for hospitals with the lowest and highest proportions of African-American patients, July 2012-June 2015.

| | COPD RSRR (%) | |
|--------------|---|---|
| | Lowest proportion (0%) African-American patients; n=521 | Highest proportion ($\geq 22.8\%$) African-American patients; n=378 |
| Maximum | 24.5 | 24.5 |
| 90% | 20.9 | 21.9 |
| 75% | 20.3 | 21.2 |
| Median (50%) | 19.8 | 20.3 |
| 25% | 19.3 | 19.5 |
| 10% | 18.8 | 18.9 |
| Minimum | 16.9 | 16.5 |

The median COPD RSRR for hospitals with the lowest proportion of African-American patients was 19.8% (interquartile range [IQR]: 19.3%-20.3%; Figure 1 and Table 1). The median COPD RSRR for hospitals with the highest proportion of African-American patients was 20.3% (IQR: 19.5%-21.2%; Figure 1 and Table 1).

Hospitals with the lowest proportion of African-American patients had a median COPD RSRR that was 0.5 percentage points lower than hospitals with the highest proportion.

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2. Dorsey, K., Grady, J. N., Desai, N., et al. 2016 Condition-Specific Measures Updates and Specifications Report Hospital-Level 30-Day Risk-Standardized Readmission Measures: Acute Myocardial Infarction – Version 9.0, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease – Version 5.0, Heart Failure – Version 9.0, Pneumonia – Version 9.0, Stroke – Version 5.0. <https://www.qualitynet.org/dcs/ContentServer?c=Page&pagename=QnetPublic%2FPage%2FQnetTier4&cid=1219069855841>. Accessed May 9, 2016.
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