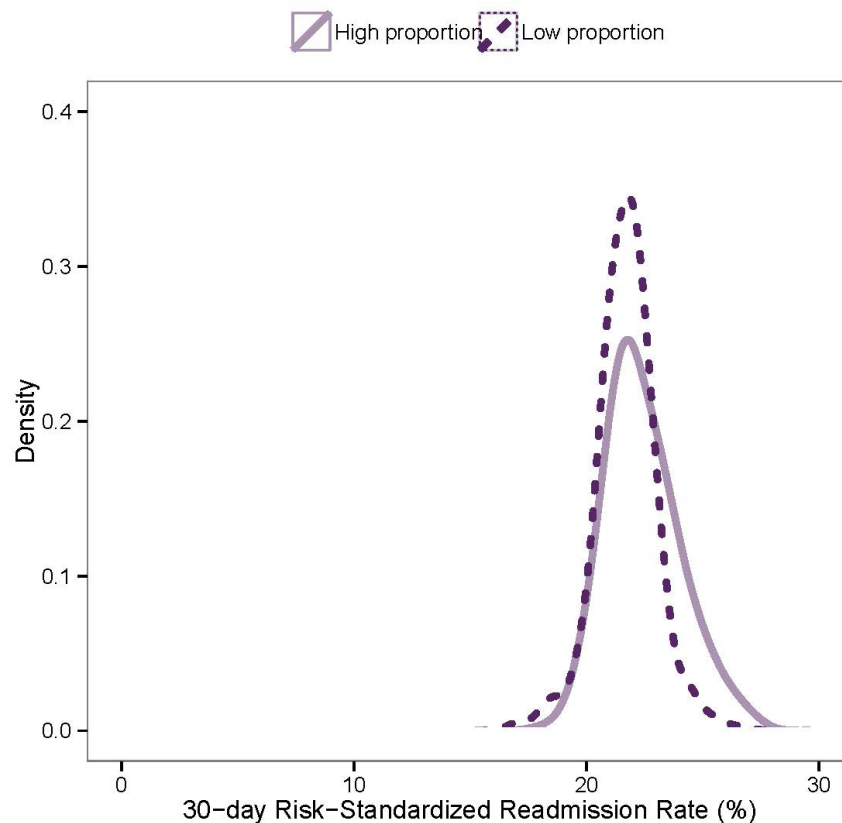


SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC STATUS

► **Performance on the heart failure readmission measure:** Hospitals that serve high and low proportions of Medicaid 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 heart failure [1]. The heart failure 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 hospitalization for heart failure [2]. The heart failure readmission measure has been publicly reported on [Hospital Compare](#) since 2009 and has been included in the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program (HRRP) since 2012 [3, 4].

FIGURE I. Distributions of heart failure RSRRs (%) for hospitals with the lowest and highest proportions of Medicaid admissions, July 2012-June 2015.



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 Medicaid patients might impact a hospital's RSRR, we examined RSRRs among hospitals with high and low proportions of Medicaid patients. We compared the heart failure RSRRs for the 375 hospitals with the lowest overall proportion of Medicaid admissions ($\leq 6.6\%$ of a hospital's admissions) to the 375 hospitals with the highest overall proportion of Medicaid admissions ($\geq 29.1\%$ of a hospital's admissions) for the July 2012 – June 2015 reporting period. We defined hospitals with the lowest and highest proportions of Medicaid admissions as those that fall within the lowest and highest deciles of all hospitals with 25 or more qualifying discharges. The proportion of Medicaid admissions for each hospital was determined using the American Hospital Association (AHA) Annual Survey Database Fiscal Year 2014 [5]. To ensure accurate assessment of each hospital, the heart failure 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].

Prepared for CMS by Yale New Haven Health Services Corporation – Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation (YNHHC/CORE) September 2016

TABLE 1. Distributions of heart failure RSRRs (%) for hospitals with the lowest and highest proportions of Medicaid admissions, July 2012-June 2015.

	Heart failure RSRR (%)	
	Lowest proportion ($\leq 6.6\%$) Medicaid admissions; n=375	Highest proportion ($\geq 29.1\%$) Medicaid admissions; n=375
Maximum	26.7	27.2
90%	23.1	24.6
75%	22.4	23.4
Median (50%)	21.8	22.2
25%	21.0	21.3
10%	20.3	20.6
Minimum	17.0	18.1

The median heart failure RSRR for hospitals with the lowest proportion of Medicaid admissions was 21.8% (interquartile range [IQR]: 21.0%- 22.4%; Figure 1 and Table 1). The median heart failure RSRR for hospitals with the highest proportion of Medicaid admissions was 22.2% (IQR: 21.3%- 23.4%; Figure 1 and Table 1).

Hospitals with the lowest proportion of Medicaid admissions had a median heart failure RSRR that was 0.4 percentage points lower than hospitals with the highest proportion.

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