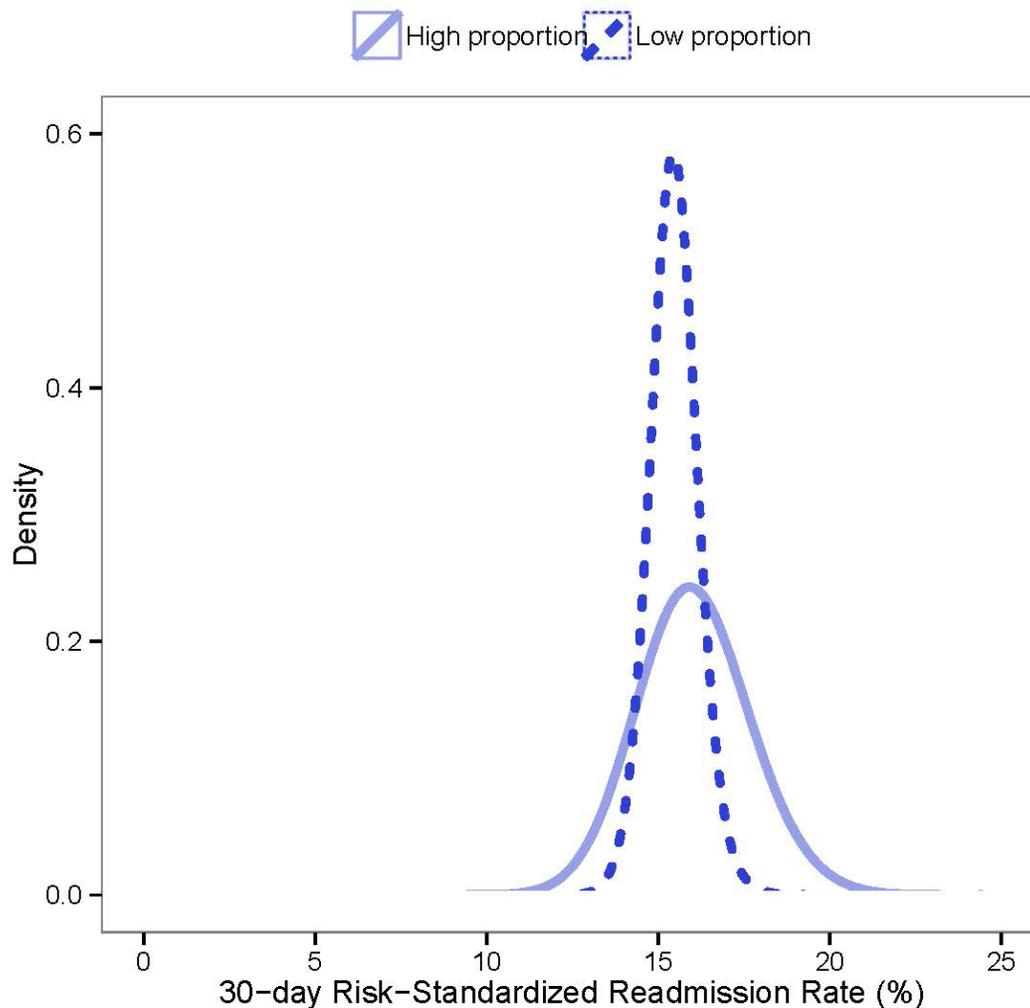▶ **Performance on the hospital-wide readmission measure:** Hospitals that serve high and low proportions of African-American patients.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) periodically investigates select hospital practices that may impact a hospital's performance on the hospital-wide all-cause unplanned readmission measure for Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) beneficiaries aged 65 or older [1 ,2]. The hospital-wide readmission measure assesses the occurrence of unplanned readmission for any cause within 30 days after the date of discharge from hospitalization for patients admitted for any condition or procedure [2]. The hospital-wide readmission measure has been publicly reported on _Hospital Compare_ since 2013 [3].

FIGURE I. _Distributions of hospital-wide RSRRs (%) for hospitals with the lowest and highest proportions of African-American patients, July 2014 – June 2015._

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

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Variation in risk-standardized readmission rates (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 hospital-wide RSRRs for the 954 hospitals with the lowest overall proportion of African-American Medicare FFS patients (0% of a hospital's Medicare FFS patients) to the 456 hospitals with the highest proportion of African-American Medicare FFS patients (≥ 21.6% of a hospital's Medicare FFS patients) for the July 2014 – 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 hospital-wide 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 hospital-wide RSRRs (%) for hospitals with the lowest and highest proportions of African-American patients, July 2014 – June 2015.*

	Hospital-wide RSRR (%)	
	Lowest proportion (0%) African-American patients; n=954	Highest proportion (≥ 21.6%) African-American patients; n=456
Maximum	17.9	19.4
90%	16.0	17.3
75%	15.7	16.6
Median (50%)	15.4	15.9
25%	15.2	15.4
10%	14.9	15.0
Minimum	13.7	13.7

The median hospital-wide RSRR for hospitals with the lowest proportion of African-American patients was 15.4% (interquartile range [IQR]: 15.2%-15.7%; Figure 1 and Table 1).The median hospital-wide RSRR for hospitals with the highest proportion of African-American patients was 15.9% (IQR: 15.4%-16.6%; Figure 1 and Table 1).

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

1. 2015 Medicare Hospital Quality Chartbook. Prepared by Yale New Haven Health Services Corporation Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. https://www.cms.gov/medicare/quality-initiatives-patient-assessment-instruments/hospitalqualityinits/outcomemeasures.html. Accessed March 1, 2016.

2. Karen Dorsey, Jacqueline N. Grady, Leora I. Horwitz, et al. 2016 All-Cause Hospital-Wide Measure Updates and Specifications Report: Hospital-Level 30-Day Risk-Standardized Readmission Measure – Version 5.0. https://www.qualitynet.org/dcs/ContentServer?c=Page&pagename=QnetPublic%2FPage%2FQnetTier4&cid=1219069855841. Accessed May 9, 2016.

3. Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting (IQR) Program Overview. QualityNet website. http://www.qualitynet.org/dcs/ContentServer?c=Page&pagename=QnetPublic%2F-Page%2FQnetTier2&cid=1138115987129. Accessed March 4, 2016.