

Preventable Readmissions

Discharge from a hospital is a critical transition point in a patient's care. Poor care coordination upon discharge can lead to adverse events and avoidable re-hospitalizations. Many factors contribute to hospital readmissions, including:

- Complications from the inpatient treatment during the hospital stay
- Inaccuracies reconciling medication lists
- Inadequate quality of care or care coordination
- Lack of follow-up care
- Unexpected worsening conditions of the disease

Not every readmission to the hospital is preventable, but those that can be avoided should be, not only for the patient's health, but also financially for the institution.

According to data released by CMS, Medicare will reduce reimbursements for 2,597 hospitals due to readmissions penalties in fiscal year (FY) 2017. Due to readmission measurement changes, fines are expected to total \$528 million, about \$108 million more than last year. These penalties are based on Medicare patients who left the hospital from July 2012 to June 2015.

To see your hospital's five-year look back, Kaiser health compiled the following report:

https://kaiserhealthnews.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/readmission_five_years_chart_with_ink.pdf

Here are a few suggestions to avoid readmissions at your facility:

1. Assess member follow-up needs within the first seven days and again 30 days after discharge
2. Remind members of PCP and specialist follow-up appointments after discharge and assist with transportation, if needed
3. Focus on communication with members, caregivers, and clinicians about discharge needs before and after discharge
4. Provide patient education regarding self-care after return home
5. Reconcile medications with the member and caregivers before and after discharge to improve medication adherence

As always, we appreciate your ideas and feedback. Thank you for the quality work you do! All editions of the Friday Focus are available on the SWHP website: <https://swhp.org/en-us/prov/news/providers-friday-focus>



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Rau, J. (2016). Medicare's Readmission Penalties Hit New High. Kaiser Health News. Retrieved 27 December 2016, from <http://khn.org/news/more-than-half-of-hospitals-to-be-penalized-for-excess-readmissions/>

