

**Measure Information Form**  
**Collected For: CMS Outcome Measures (Claims Based)**

**Measure Set:** CMS Readmission Measures

**Set Measure ID #:** READM-30-STR

**Performance Measure Name:** Hospital, 30-day all-cause risk-standardized readmission rate (RSRR) following acute ischemic stroke hospitalization.

**Description:** The measure estimates a hospital-level, risk-standardized, all-cause unplanned 30-day readmission rate for patients discharged from the hospital with a principal discharge diagnosis of acute ischemic stroke.

**Rationale:** Readmission of patients who were recently discharged after hospitalization with stroke represents an important, expensive, and often preventable adverse outcome. The risk of readmission can be modified by the quality and type of care provided to these patients. Improving readmission rates is the joint responsibility of hospitals and clinicians in partnership with community. Measuring readmission will create incentives to invest in interventions to improve hospital care, better assess the readiness of patients for discharge, and facilitate transitions to outpatient status.

**Type of Measure:** Outcome

**Improvement Noted As:** A decrease in the RSRR.

**Numerator Statement:**

This outcome measure does not have a traditional numerator and denominator like a core process measure (e.g., percentage of adult patients with diabetes aged 18-75 years receiving one or more hemoglobin A1c tests per year); thus, we are using this field to define our outcome. The calculation of the rate is defined below under Measure Calculation.

The outcome for this measure is 30 day all-cause unplanned readmission. We define this as readmission for any unplanned cause within 30 days from the date of discharge of the index stroke admission.

**Denominator Statement:**

The target population for this measure includes admissions for Medicare Fee-for-Service (FFS) beneficiaries aged greater than or equal to 65 years discharged from acute care non-federal hospitals with a principal discharge diagnosis of acute ischemic stroke.

**Included Populations:**

Admissions for Medicare FFS beneficiaries greater than or equal to 65 years of age discharged from non-federal acute care hospitals, having a principal discharge diagnosis of acute ischemic stroke.

CMS FFS beneficiaries hospitalized within an acute care non-federal hospital are included if they have been enrolled in Part A and Part B Medicare for the 12 months prior to the date of admission to ensure a full year of administrative data for risk-adjustment.

For patients who are transferred between one acute care hospital and another, the measures consider these multiple contiguous hospitalizations as a single acute episode of care. Readmission for transferred patients is attributed to the hospital that ultimately discharges the patient to a non acute care setting (e.g., to home or a skilled nursing facility). Thus, for patients who are transferred between two or more hospitals, if the patient is readmitted in the 30 days following the final hospitalization, the readmission is attributed to the final hospital.

#### **ICD-9-CM codes that define the patient cohort**

433.01	Occlusion and stenosis of precerebral arteries, Basilar artery with cerebral infarction
433.11	Occlusion and stenosis of precerebral arteries, Carotid artery with cerebral infarction
433.21	Occlusion and stenosis of precerebral arteries, Vertebral artery with cerebral infarction
433.31	Occlusion and stenosis of precerebral arteries, Multiple and bilateral with cerebral infarction
433.81	Occlusion and stenosis of precerebral arteries, Other specified precerebral artery with cerebral infarction
433.91	Occlusion and stenosis of precerebral arteries, Unspecified precerebral artery with cerebral infarction, Precerebral artery NOS
434.01	Occlusion of cerebral arteries, Cerebral thrombosis with cerebral infarction, Thrombosis of cerebral arteries
434.11	Occlusion of cerebral arteries, Cerebral embolism with cerebral infarction
434.91	Occlusion of cerebral arteries, Cerebral artery occlusion, unspecified, with cerebral infarction

#### **Cohort exclusions (excluded admissions):**

- Admissions for patients with an in-hospital death are excluded because they are not eligible for readmission.
- Admissions for patients without at least 30 days post-discharge enrollment in FFS Medicare are excluded because the 30-day readmission outcome cannot be assessed in this group.
- Admissions for patients having a principal diagnosis of stroke during the index hospitalization and subsequently transferred to another acute care facility are excluded because we are focusing on discharges to non-acute care settings.
- Admissions for patients who are discharged against medical advice (AMA) are excluded because providers did not have the opportunity to deliver full care and prepare the patient for discharge.

In addition, if a patient has one or more stroke admissions within 30 days of discharge from the index stroke admission, only one is counted as a readmission. “Unplanned” readmissions occurring within the 30-day post-discharge timeframe are not eligible to be counted as additional index admissions for stroke. However, once the 30-day measurement period that is associated with the first index admission has passed, the next eligible hospitalization is considered a new index admission.

**Admissions not counted as readmissions:**

Admissions identified as planned by the planned readmissions algorithm are not counted as readmissions. The “algorithm” is a set of criteria for classifying readmissions as planned or unplanned using Medicare claims. The algorithm identifies admissions that are typically planned and may occur within 30 days of discharge from the hospital. CMS based the planned readmission algorithm on three principles:

1. A few specific, limited types of care are always considered planned (transplant surgery, maintenance chemotherapy, rehabilitation);
2. Otherwise, a planned readmission is defined as a non-acute readmission for a scheduled procedure; and
3. Admissions for acute illness or for complications of care are never planned.

The planned readmission algorithm uses a flow chart and four tables of procedures and conditions to operationalize these principles and to classify readmissions as planned. The flow chart and tables are available in the Stroke Readmission 2013 Measure Updates and Specifications Report posted on QualityNet (<http://www.qualitynet.org>).

**Risk Adjustment:**

Our approach to risk adjustment is tailored to and appropriate for a publicly reported outcome measure, as articulated in the American Heart Association (AHA) Scientific Statement, “Standards for Statistical Models Used for Public Reporting of Health Outcomes” (Krumholz et al., 2006).

The measure adjusts for key variables that are clinically relevant and have strong relationships with the outcome (e.g., age, sex, comorbid diseases, and indicators of frailty). For each patient, covariates are obtained from administrative data extending 12 months prior to, and including, the index admission. For all patients, information from Medicare inpatient claims, physician Part B claims and hospital outpatient claims are used for risk adjustment.

The model seeks to adjust for case differences based on the clinical status of the patient at the time of the index admission. Accordingly, only comorbidities that convey information about the patient at that time or in the 12 months prior, and not complications that arise during the course of the index hospitalization are included in the risk adjustment.

The final set of risk-adjustment variables included:

Demographics	Age-65 (continuous) Male
Cardiovascular/ Cerebrovascular	Congestive Heart Failure Hypertensive heart disease Cerebral Hemorrhage Ischemic or Unspecified Stroke Cerebrovascular Disease Hemiplegia, paraplegia, paralysis, functional disability
Comorbidity	Metastatic cancer and acute leukemia Cancer Diabetes and DM complications Protein-calorie malnutrition Disorders of Fluid/Electrolyte/Acid-Base Obesity/disorders of thyroid, cholesterol, lipids Severe Hematological Disorders Iron Deficiency and Other/Unspecified Anemias and Blood Disease Dementia and senility Quadriplegia, paraplegia, functional disability Seizure Disorders and Convulsions Vascular or circulatory disease COPD Other lung disorder End-stage renal disease or dialysis Renal Failure Other urinary tract disorders Decubitus ulcer or chronic skin ulcer Major Symptoms, Abnormalities

Full details of the development of the risk-standardization model for this measure are available at: <http://www.qualitynet.org>.

**Data Collection Approach:** Medicare claims data

**Data Accuracy:** The administrative claims data used to calculate the measure are maintained by CMS' Office of Information Services. These data undergo additional quality assurance checks during measure development and maintenance

**Measure Analysis Suggestions:** None

**Sampling:** No

**Data Reported As:** Hospital 30-day, all-cause, risk-standardized readmission rate (RSRR) following acute ischemic stroke hospitalization.

**Measure Calculation:**

The measure estimates hospital-level 30 day all-cause RSRR for stroke using hierarchical logistic regression modeling. In brief, the approach simultaneously models two levels (patient and hospital) to account for the variance in patient outcomes within and between hospitals. At the patient level, the model adjusts the log-odds of a hospital readmission within 30 days of discharge for age, sex, selected clinical covariates, and a hospital-specific intercept. At the hospital level, it models the hospital-specific intercepts as arising from a normal distribution. The hospital intercept represents the underlying risk of a readmission at the hospital, after accounting for patient risk. The hospital-specific intercepts are given a distribution in order to account for the clustering (non-independence) of patients within the same hospital. If there were no differences among hospitals, then after adjusting for patient risk the hospital intercepts should be identical across all hospitals.

The RSRR is calculated as the ratio of the number of “predicted” readmissions to the number of “expected” readmissions, multiplied by the national unadjusted readmission rate. For each hospital, the “numerator” of the ratio is the number of readmissions within 30 days predicted on the basis of the hospital’s performance with its observed case-mix, and the “denominator” is the number of readmissions expected on the basis of the nation’s performance with that hospital’s case-mix. This approach is analogous to a ratio of “observed” to “expected” used in other types of statistical analyses. It conceptually allows for a comparison of a particular hospital’s performance given its case-mix to an average hospital’s performance with the same case-mix. Thus, a lower ratio indicates lower-than-expected readmission (i.e., better quality), and a higher ratio indicates higher-than-expected readmission (i.e., worse quality).

The predicted number of readmissions (the numerator) is calculated by regressing the risk factors and the hospital-specific intercept on the risk of readmission, multiplying the estimated regression coefficients by the patient characteristics in the hospital, transforming, and then summing over all patients attributed to the hospital to get a value. The expected number of readmissions (the denominator) is obtained by regressing the risk factors and a common intercept on the readmission outcome using all hospitals in our sample, multiplying the subsequent estimated regression coefficients by the patient characteristics observed in the hospital, transforming, and then summing over all patients in the hospital to get a value. To assess hospital performance in any reporting period, we re-estimate the model coefficients using the years of data in that period.

The statistical modeling approach is described fully in the original methodology report.

**Selected References:**

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