

Reducing hospital readmission rates will require community-focused efforts

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Recent research indicates that most of the variation in hospital readmission rates in the United States is related to geography and other factors over which hospitals have little or no control. Access and quality of care outside of the hospital setting seem to be especially important.

A new editorial that addresses these findings notes that a broader focus on [community health systems](#), not just performance of individual hospitals, may be needed to reduce hospital readmissions.

Because high readmission rates trigger reductions in Medicare reimbursements to hospitals, facilities in socioeconomically disadvantaged and underserved communities may be disproportionately penalized. The editorial is published in *Health Services Research*.

More information: Nuckols, T. K. (2015), County-Level Variation in Readmission Rates: Implications for the Hospital Readmission Reduction Program's Potential to Succeed. *Health Services Research*, 50: 12-19. [DOI: 10.1111/1475-6773.12268](https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6773.12268)

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