Methodology for Calculating All Cause, Unplanned, 30-Day Hospital Readmission Rate, California
Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development

This measure estimates the hospital-level, unplanned, all-cause readmission rate after admission for any eligible condition within 30 days of hospital discharge for patients aged 18 and older. The measure reports a single statewide readmission rate and includes total number of admissions, total number of all-cause 30-day unplanned readmissions and readmission rates by age, gender, race/ethnicity and expected payer.

Data: Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, Patient Discharge Data

Summary of Inclusions/Exclusions:

Inclusions:
- Patient is aged 18 years or older
- Patient is alive upon discharge
- Patient is not transferred to another acute care hospital upon discharge
- A readmission within 30 days will also be eligible as an index admission, if it meets all other eligibility criteria. This allows the measure to capture repeated readmissions for the same patient, whether at the same or another hospital.
- Discharge from an acute care hospital

Exclusions:
- Psychiatric, substance abuse, long-term, non-acute care, rehabilitation and some specialty hospitals (e.g., cancer, and children’s hospitals)
- Discharges with unverified or missing patient identifiers
- Discharges with an apparently high volume of readmissions (10 or more visits in the year)
- Admissions for patients to a Medicare Prospective Payment System-exempt cancer hospital
- Admissions for patients with medical treatment of cancer
- Admissions for primary psychiatric disease
- Admissions for “rehabilitation care; fitting of prostheses and adjustment devices”

Numerator: The outcome for this measure is unplanned all-cause 30-day readmission. We defined a readmission as an inpatient admission to any acute care hospitals which occurs within 30 days of the discharge date of an eligible index admission. All readmissions are counted as outcomes except those that are considered planned (i.e., scheduled surgery).

Denominator: Admissions to acute care hospitals for patients aged 18 years or older

Calculation of 30-day readmission rate:

\[
\frac{\text{Number of stays with at least one unplanned subsequent hospital stay within 30 days}}{\text{Total number of hospital stays in one calendar year}}
\]