

March 14, 2016

Reference: 2014 Cardiac Care Mortality Report

At Sentara RMH Medical Center we pride ourselves on providing excellent care to all of our patients. SRMH consistently monitors our patient care processes to ensure that we are using evidence-based care. VHI's transparency with health care data supports our ongoing priority of improving clinical care.

The SRMH Quality department thoroughly reviewed the open heart mortality and readmission data released in the 2014 Cardiac Care Mortality Report. VHI reported a greater than expected mortality and readmission rate for the Open Heart Surgery category. Upon review, SRMH's findings indicated that mortality was an expected outcome for these patients, based on their specific diagnoses and the complexity of their health problems. Additionally, a majority of the patients who were readmitted was because of known complications that are inherent for the type of procedures they underwent.

Since the inception of our Cardiothoracic Surgery program in 2008, SRMH has voluntarily participated in the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) national database. The STS composite CABG score and rating system is the most widely accepted and most comprehensive measure of Cardiothoracic Surgery quality currently available.

By voluntarily participating in the STS database, SRMH gains insight into how we compare with leading heart programs across the nation. According to the STS database, SRMH is performing better than other hospitals for mortality and on par with other hospitals for readmissions both meeting national standards of care for heart surgery.

SRMH's Cardiothoracic Surgery program is considered low volume relative to the other major institutions that participate in the VHI report. SRMH relies heavily on the comprehensiveness of the STS database in monitoring our outcomes, and on the associated risk adjustment incorporated into the STS data. The VHI data does not reflect the comprehensiveness of the STS database.

Finally, Sentara Healthcare has established a system-wide Cardiac High Performance Team which monitors the performance of cardiac care within all Sentara hospitals on a monthly basis with a focus to standardize evidence-based practices to improve quality, safety and service which produces consistent excellent outcomes for the patients we serve.

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