

Cardiac Care In Virginia: Mortality Down By 35%

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Hospital	Total Cases	Mortality Rating	Readmission Rating
San Sotomai St. Francis Medical Center	238	♥♥	♥♥♥
Sanders Williamsburg Regional Medical Center	180	♥♥	♥♥♥
Sanders Glen Hospital	393	♥♥	♥♥♥
San Sotomai Maryview Medical Center	321	♥♥	♥♥♥

Hospital Readmission Chart (Courtesy Image)

American Heart Month is upon us and, here at VHI especially, matters of the heart are very important. Heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the United States, with nearly 600,000 Americans dying of cardiovascular related diseases each year. In Virginia mortality rates from cardiac related diseases have fallen every year since 2004, ranking it the 25th in the nation

for cardiovascular deaths in 2013 (based on reporting by VAPerforms). This American Heart Month, Virginia Health Information has released updates to its Cardiac Care report, now available at http://vhi.org/cardiac_compare.asp.

As one of VHI's free online resources, the Cardiac Care report is the only one of its kind in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Not only does this report empower consumers to make more informed healthcare decisions, it also reveals valuable insight to healthcare professionals and hospitals for possible quality improvement opportunities. This performance information, mortality and readmission ratings, is provided in the following three categories: The largest category, representing 64% of cardiac care, includes non-surgical therapy for heart diseases such as angina, congestive heart failure and heart attacks.

- **Invasive Cardiology:** Accounting for 25% of cardiac care such as cardiac catheterization, cardiac pacemaker insertion, balloon angioplasty and placement of cardiac stents
- **Open Heart Surgery:** About 8% of cardiac care is for coronary artery bypass graft surgery and cardiac valve operations

Additionally, the tool allows visitors to compare mortality and readmission rates based on gender, race, age and payer type (commercial insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, etc.). Based on the report, males between the ages of 50 and 79 help make up majority of cardiac care cases in Virginia.

To complement the report, VHI provides consumers with resources to help fight and care for heart disease including profiles of physicians who specialize in its treatment. With procedure costs increasing greatly through each service line, being proactive to heart health is vital. At http://vhi.org/cardiac_compare.asp consumers can learn how to help prevent heart disease, view tips on how to avoid hospital readmissions and compare patient satisfaction ratings for Virginia-based hospitals. These satisfaction ratings are gathered through consumer surveys and are categorized into three measures: communication, comfort and overall ratings for each facility.

VHI found that 11% of patients hospitalized for any type of cardiac care were readmitted within 30 days. The most frequent cause for readmission within 30, 60, and 90 days was heart failure. After 30 days, the percent of patients readmitted increases to 23% within a 90 day timeframe. Of the 76 hospitals with measurable cardiac cases, four had a readmission rating of "less than expected" in the Heart Failure category.

This indicates that the 30-day related readmission rate at the facility was lower than expected based on the 3M APR-DRG and severity index for patients within a hospital compared to similar patients treated in hospitals across Virginia.

Nevertheless, from 2011 to 2015, mortality has declined steadily in Virginia by 35%. This decline can be attributed to better eating habits, blood pressure control, effective use of medications and more regular follow-up care after hospitalization. By focusing on these factors, consumers and providers have a great opportunity to improve cardiac care within Virginia.