

## **Mortality rates are poor indicators of hospital quality for medical diagnoses**

A Monte Carlo simulation model demonstrated that for individual diagnosis related groups (DRGs), mortality rates were a poor measure of quality, even using the optimistic assumption of perfect case-mix adjustment and large quality differences among hospitals. Even if all medical DRGs are aggregated to attain a larger sample size, the sensitivity and positive predictive value for detecting poor quality hospitals are low. Hospital mortality rates for medical diagnoses seem unlikely to be accurate predictors of poor quality, and punitive measures based on mortality rates would frequently penalize good or average hospitals.

Hofer TP, Hayward RA. Identifying poor quality hospitals: can hospital mortality rates detect quality problems for medical diagnoses? *Medical Care* 1996;34(8):737-753. Contact: Tim Hofer, MD, (734) 930-5100, e-mail at [thofer@umich.edu](mailto:thofer@umich.edu).