

Control of heart disease risk factors varies among outpatient practices

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Control of heart disease risk factors varies widely among outpatient practices, according to a study presented at the American Heart Association's Quality of Care and Outcomes Research Scientific Sessions 2013.

Researchers compared electronic health records of 115,737 patients in 18 primary care and cardiology practices participating in The Guideline Advantage™, a collaboration of the [American Cancer Society](#), [American Diabetes Association](#) and [American Heart Association](#) that aims to reduce risks for chronic diseases. They found:

- The percentage of people whose hypertension was under control (less than 140/90 mm Hg) ranged from 58.7 percent to 75.1 percent.
- The percentage of diabetic patients with cholesterol under control ("bad" [low density lipoprotein](#) cholesterol under 100 mg/dL) ranged from 53.8 percent to 100 percent.
- The percentage of patients screened for smoking, and receiving a tobacco cessation intervention, ranged from 53.8 percent to 86.1 percent.

"Previously, we've focused on improving the quality of inpatient hospital care and haven't explored enough how to improve outpatient care," said Zubin Eapen, M.D., the study's lead author and an assistant professor of medicine at Duke University in Durham, N.C. "This baseline snapshot lets us see just how much progress could be made in preventing or

managing diseases."

"It's eye-opening for practices to see how much better or worse they're doing than their peers on nationally derived measures of quality. They can learn to improve in collaboration with others instead of alone," he said.

Provided by American Heart Association

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