

Former prisoners more likely to be hospitalized for preventable conditions

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Complications of diabetes, hypertension, asthma, and other preventable conditions are more likely to land former prisoners in the hospital, Yale School of Medicine researchers report in the July 22 online issue of *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

According to the study, about one in 70 former inmates are hospitalized for an acute condition within seven days of release, and one in 12 by 90 days, a rate much higher than the general population.

"The period immediately after release has a high risk of an event requiring hospitalization, indicating a potential target for improving health care in this population before and after release," said the study's corresponding author Emily Wang, M.D., assistant professor of medicine at Yale School of Medicine.

Wang and her colleagues studied the risk of hospitalization for Medicare beneficiaries released from [correctional facilities](#). Using data from Medicare administrative claims, they identified 110,419 fee-for-service beneficiaries who were released from a correctional facility from 2002 through 2010, and then matched controls by age, sex, race, Medicare status, and residential zip code.

The team found that the odds of hospitalization were higher for released inmates compared with the matched controls. Wang said the results also have [policy implications](#) for the roll out of the Affordable Care Act.

"In states that have adopted Medicaid expansion of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, 30-65% of recently released inmates who were previously uninsured may be newly eligible for Medicaid," said Wang. "But our study provides data that providing coverage is only the first step in reducing preventable hospitalizations post release."

More information: *JAMA Internal Medicine* (July 22, 2013).

Provided by Yale University

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