Gov't report: Hospitals improving patient safety

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The government says hospitals are becoming safer for patients due to a quality improvement partnership between industry and federal agencies.

A report out Wednesday from Health and Human Services finds that adverse events such as medication mistakes, falls and infections went down by 9 percent from 2010 to 2012, the latest year that such statistics were available.

That prevented nearly 15,000 deaths and saved $4 billion in costs, the report estimated.

Separately, a key quality indicator for Medicare patients also showed continued improvement: Readmission rates declined in 2013 for the second year in a row.

Under President Barack Obama's health care law hospitals can face financial penalties if too many Medicare beneficiaries are readmitted within 30 days of an initial hospitalization.

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