(HealthDay)—From 2000 to 2015 there was an increase in the use of
institutional post-acute care, according to a study published in the April 17 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Rachel M. Werner, M.D., Ph.D., from the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine in Philadelphia, and colleagues documented recent trends in use of institutional post-acute care for Medicare beneficiaries discharged alive from an acute care hospital between January 2000 and December 2015.

The researchers found that 20.3 and 3.7 percent of the 137,973,633 hospital discharges were discharged to skilled nursing facilities and inpatient rehabilitation facilities, respectively. From 2000 to 2015 there was an increase in the adjusted percentage of hospital discharges to post-acute care, from 21.0 to 26.3 percent, and a corresponding decrease in the adjusted percentage of discharges home (79.0 to 73.6 percent). Among patients discharged to post-acute care, there was a decrease in hospital length of stay from 9.0 to 7.3 days in 2000 and 2015, respectively; a decrease from 5.7 to 4.8 days was seen in hospital length of stay among patients discharged home. From 2000 to 2014, length of stay in post-acute care increased from 21.7 to 25.7 days, with a decrease to 25.1 days in 2015.

"Despite its proliferation, there is little evidence that post-acute care improves key patient outcomes—preventing rehospitalizations or improving functional recovery," the authors write. "Further investigating how post-acute care affects patient outcomes is essential."

One author disclosed financial ties to CarePort Health.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)]

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