

Nutrition-focused program at home health agency beneficial

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(HealthDay)—A nutrition-focused quality-improvement program (QIP)

conducted in a home health agency (HHA) can reduce rates of hospitalization and health care resource utilization, according to a study published online June 24 in the *Journal of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition*.

Katie Riley, R.N., from Advocate Health Care in Downers Grove, Illinois, and colleagues examined the effect of a nutrition-focused QIP conducted in a HHA. A total of 1,546 patients who were at-risk or malnourished hospitalized patients discharged to the HHA, referred by a physician at an outpatient visit, or enrolled at a HHA through a skilled nursing facility were included in the QIP. Comparisons were made to a historic and a concurrent group of [patients](#) (7,413 and 5,235, respectively).

The researchers found that there were reductions in the relative risk of hospitalization post-enrollment to the QIP of 24.3 percent, 22.8 percent, and 18.3 percent at 30, 60, and 90 days, respectively, compared with the historic group, and of 18.2 percent, 16.2 percent, and 12.1 percent compared with the concurrent group. The total cost savings were \$2,318,894 from reduced 90-day [health care](#) resource utilization, which was equivalent to \$1,500 per patient treated.

"While the primary reason people come to home [health](#) isn't because they're malnourished or at risk, we have found that when we do pay attention to their nutrition care, it helps promote their strength and prevents them from going back to the hospital, which ultimately reduces [health care costs](#)," Riley said in a statement.

Several authors disclosed [financial ties](#) to Abbott, which provided a research grant to Advocate Health Care to support the study.

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

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