

Public reporting has not improved German hospital quality, finds study

April 3 2023



Credit: Unsplash/CC0 Public Domain

Hospital quality has been measured and made publicly available for more than two decades in the U.S. In Germany, similar efforts were launched in 2004, when all acute care hospitals began to be required to

report structural, process, and outcome indicators as part of a national quality monitoring program. Hospitals are now mandated to submit quality reports annually.

The German [hospital](#) market presents a unique opportunity to examine the relationship between public reporting and quality improvement in the absence of performance-linked payment incentives in a high-income country. In an analysis about the successes of quality measurement to date, Esra Eren Bayindir and Jonas Schreyögg, both of the University of Hamburg, reviewed quality indicators for 2012–19, examining data for several common health services performed in hospitals, including hip and knee replacements, pressure ulcers, and childbirth.

The authors found that on average, hospitals with low quality ratings were more likely to move to a higher quality category, but hospitals with high quality ratings were more likely to move to a lower category. According to the authors, although hospitals' overall motivation and [market forces](#) play roles in improving quality, they are not sufficient to maintain the quality of high-performing hospitals.

The authors' findings support the idea that in Germany, public reporting provides an important quality benchmark. However, they conclude, quality improvement has not been achieved for some indicators, even in the absence of price competition. They recommend making [hospital quality](#) information more accessible to the public, especially to those with limited health literacy, and to further promote its use among referring physicians to serve as a potential base for selection and to speed up [quality improvement](#).

The study is published in the journal *Health Affairs*.

More information: Public Reporting Has Not Improved German Hospital Quality, *Health Affairs* (2023).

Provided by Health Affairs

Citation: Public reporting has not improved German hospital quality, finds study (2023, April 3)
retrieved 7 August 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-04-german-hospital-quality.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.