

Early alert intervention cuts heart failure readmission

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(HealthDay)—An electronic medical record system, designed to identify patients who have been discharged from heart failure hospitalization and present in the emergency department, can prevent readmissions, according to a study published in *The American Journal of Medicine*.

Azam Hadi, M.D., from the Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis, and colleagues conducted a [retrospective cohort study](#) involving patients admitted with a diagnosis of heart failure between February 2011 and January 2013. Patients were tagged on discharge from hospital and were then identified during registration in the [emergency department](#) within 30 days. An advanced provider was dispatched to the emergency department to initiate aggressive diagnostics and therapy toward avoidance of readmission. Readmission was compared before and after implementation of the early readmission alert intervention.

The researchers observed a significant decrease in the 30-day heart failure readmission rate in the early readmission alert intervention group versus the pre-implementation group (17.3 versus 23.2 percent; $P = 0.003$). In the implementation group, there was an increase in admissions to the observation unit (from 2.3 to 4.1 percent; $P = 0.045$). Over time, there was also a decrease in the monthly percentage of heart failure readmissions out of all hospital readmissions.

"The emergency department early readmission alert is comparable to other strategies of decreasing [heart failure](#) readmissions and may be evaluated in larger trials and quality improvement programs," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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