

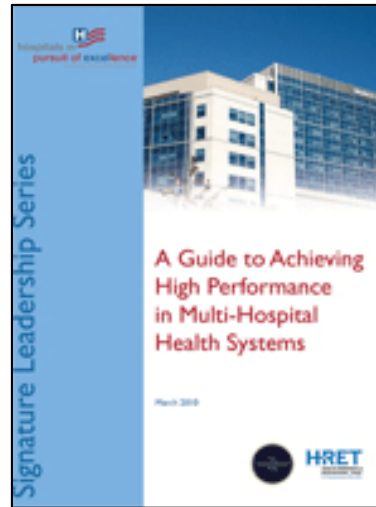
# A Guide to Achieving High Performance in Multi-Hospital Health Systems

March 2010



TRANSFORMING HEALTH CARE THROUGH RESEARCH AND EDUCATION





Yonek J., Hines S., and Joshi M. *A Guide to Achieving High Performance in Multi-Hospital Health Systems*. Health Research & Educational Trust, Chicago, IL. March 2010. Access at <http://www.hpoe.org/hpoe/reports-guides.shtml>.

Funded by The Commonwealth Fund.

# Overview

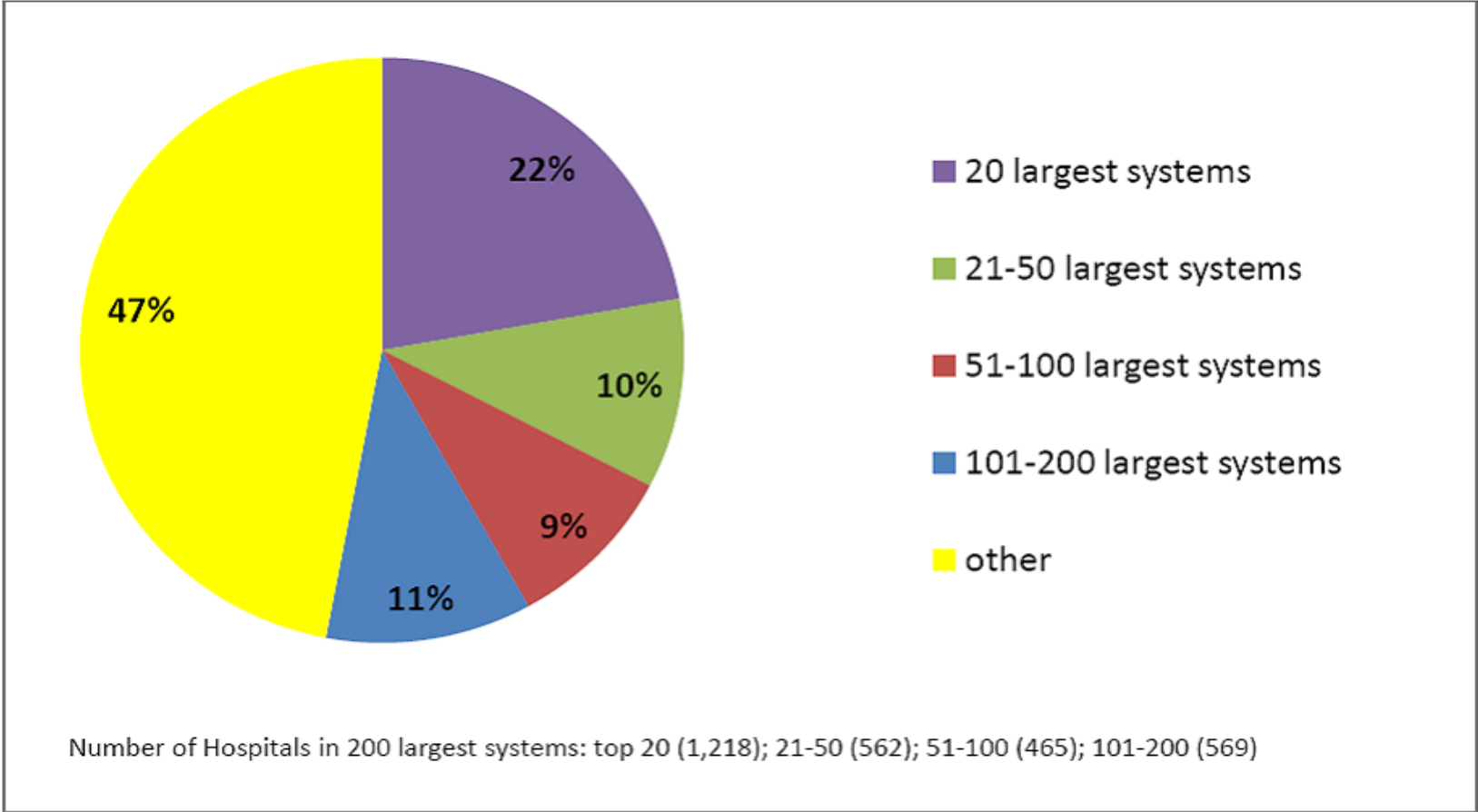
- Commonwealth Fund-supported research to identify and disseminate best practices associated with high-performing health systems
- Information sources
  - Publicly available quality information: HCA core measures, risk-adjusted readmissions, risk-adjusted mortality, patient experience
  - System-level characteristics from AHA database
  - System leadership interviews
- Identified 17 specific best practices associated with high performance
- Lessons transferrable to all hospitals

# Multi-Hospital Health Systems

- Multi-hospital health systems are the most common organizational structure in the hospital industry.
- Two or more health systems account for half of all hospitals and hospital admissions in the U.S.
- While many hospitals are parts of larger health care systems, the role of systems in strengthening quality and safety is less understood.

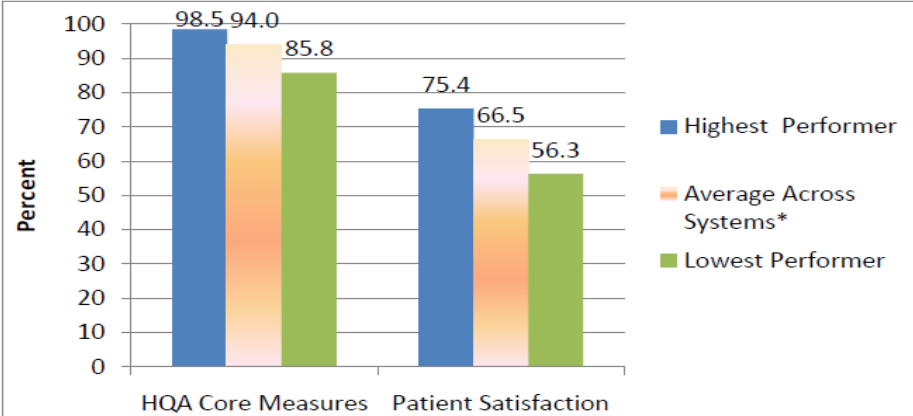
# Multi-Hospital Systems: Volume of Care

Figure 1: Percent of Inpatient Stays in System-Affiliated Hospitals

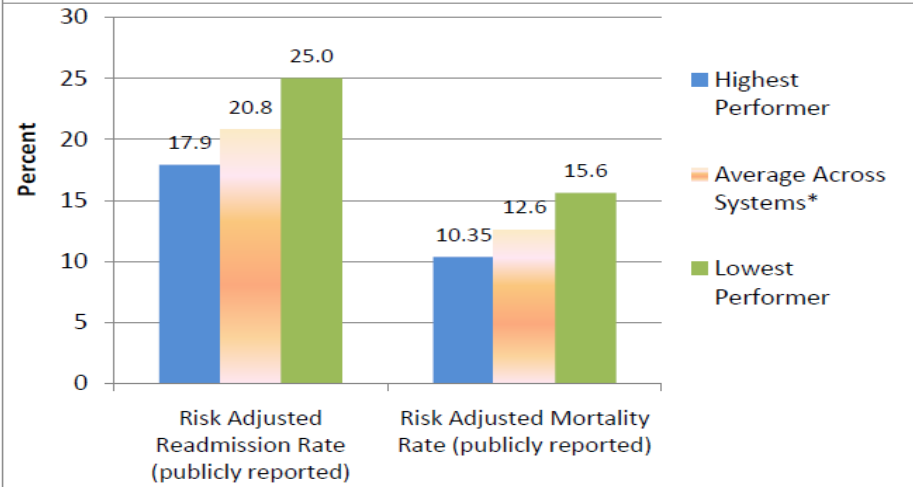


# National Opportunity for Improvement

Figure 2: Differences in System Performance



\*N for each system average: HQA core measures = 276; patient satisfaction = 274;



\*N for each system average: mortality = 261; readmissions = 248

# Common Themes

- No one system type was most associated with high performance
- No one factor was clearly associated with high performance – success depends on a range of actions
- Creating a culture of performance excellence, accountability for results, and leadership execution are the keys to success

# Best Practices

- Establish a system-wide strategic plan with measurable goals
- Create alignment across the health system with goals and incentives
- Leverage data and measurement across the organization
- Standardize and spread best practices across the health system



# Best Practices

- Establish a System-wide Strategic Plan with Measurable Goals
  - Set both measurable short and long-term goals
  - Set goals for quality and safety based on the pursuit of perfection rather than improvement – many set threshold, stretch, and high stretch goals and track progress with performance dashboards
  - Link the system's quality goals with its operational and financial goals

# Best Practices

- Create Alignment Across the Health System with Goals and Incentives
  - Establish system-level quality steering/oversight committees to provide direction to system leaders in setting system-wide goals and aligning them with all hospitals
  - Embed health system goals into hospital leaders' goals
  - Link annual bonuses for system and hospital leaders to performance targets in the system's key strategic areas
  - Align incentive pay and/or accountability for achieving system-level quality and patient safety targets into contracts with physicians
  - Align emphasis on culture with efforts to understand and improve it

# Best Practices

- Leverage Data and Measurement Across the Organization
  - Use an “all or none” or “perfect care” approach to set targets
  - Consider setting targets based upon event counts
  - Share dashboards with hospital leaders and staff frequently to identify opportunities and take action
  - Post dashboard information on the system’s intranet
  - Engage in national benchmarking initiatives to achieve greater transparency and healthy competition between hospitals
  - Utilize corporate support through data mining of existing information systems, frequent analyses, and reporting of measures for hospital-level improvement

# Best Practices

- Standardize and Spread Best Practices Across the Health System
  - Establish a process to identify and select practices for standardization
  - Use ongoing education and skills development to spread best practices
  - Effectively disseminate best practices across the system

# Concluding Comments

- Multi-hospital health system leaders can employ a variety of practices to improve care across the system.
- Keys to success are not the specific practices themselves, but the execution of those practices and the creation of a culture that supports performance improvement.

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