



Facts about the Preventing Avoidable Heart Failure Hospitalizations Project

In March 2011, the Center for Transforming Healthcare launched its fifth project, which aims to prevent avoidable hospitalizations for people with heart failure. A chronic disease, heart failure is the most common reason for admission to the hospital among older adults. The goal of this project is to better understand why patients with heart failure periodically experience severe worsening of their condition to a degree that leads to hospitalization. Identifying the specific causes of such deteriorations will permit participating hospitals to design and implement focused interventions targeted to each important cause. The hospitals and health systems participating in this project, which was launched in collaboration with the American College of Physicians, will investigate how hospitals and community-based physician practices can work together more effectively to prevent avoidable hospitalizations for people with heart failure.

The scope of the project was narrowed to heart failure patients who have not undergone a heart transplant, do not have a ventricular assist device, and do not receive inotropic medications (which make the heart beat stronger) by intermittent or continuous infusion.

The Joint Commission Center for Transforming Healthcare uses Robust Process Improvement® (RPI®) methods and tools in the development of its solutions. RPI® is a fact-based, systematic, and data-driven problem-solving methodology. It incorporates specific tools and methods from Lean, Six Sigma and change management methodologies. Using RPI®, the project teams will discover the contributing factors that lead to what should be preventable hospitalizations for people with heart failure. The team will develop proven-effective solutions to address these factors and ultimately improve the quality of life for people with heart failure and reduce unnecessary costs associated with their care.

Project team

Cedars-Sinai Health System, California
Cleveland Clinic, Ohio
Froedtert Hospital, Wisconsin
North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System, New York
Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Illinois
The Johns Hopkins Hospital and Health System, Maryland
Virtua, New Jersey
In collaboration with the American College of Physicians

The results for this project are targeted for publication in early 2015. For more information about this project or the project team, visit the [project detail](#) page or the Center [website](#).