

## FOR MORE INFORMATION



Virginia Health Information  
Michael T. Lundberg, Executive Director  
Web Site: [www.vhi.org](http://www.vhi.org)

### Virginia Health Information Publishes Hospital Cardiac Report: Virginia Hospitals Improve Readmission and Mortality Rates

American Heart Month has come and gone, but that doesn't mean cardiac care or heart health should take a backseat. Although rates of mortality and readmissions have decreased, heart disease remains the leading cause of death in Virginia. In alignment with its mission to encourage informed consumer decision making, Virginia Health Information (VHI) has released its annual Cardiac Care report.

As one of VHI's free online resources, the Cardiac Care report is the only one of its kind in the Commonwealth of Virginia. "With five years of Cardiac Care information available, consumers and healthcare providers can see how heart care is improving in hospitals, by region and Virginia," notes Michael T. Lundberg, Executive Director of VHI. Not only does this report empower consumers to make more informed health care decisions, but it also reveals valuable insight to healthcare professionals and hospitals for possible quality improvement opportunities. This performance information, mortality and readmission ratings, is provided in the following three categories:

- ♥ **Medical Cardiology:** Non-surgical therapy for heart disease such as angina, congestive heart failure and heart attacks
- ♥ **Invasive Cardiology:** Surgeries including cardiac catheterization, cardiac pacemaker insertion, balloon angioplasty and placement of cardiac stents
- ♥ **Open Heart Surgery:** Coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery and cardiac valve operations

To complement the report, VHI provides consumers with resources to help fight and care for heart disease including profiles of physicians who specialize in its treatment. Being proactive is vital to heart health upon any diagnosis, as procedure costs increase greatly through each service line. On VHI's site, [www.vhi.org/cardiac](http://www.vhi.org/cardiac), consumers are able to review ways and steps to help prevent heart disease, tips on how they can prevent hospital readmissions and compare patient satisfaction ratings for Virginia-based hospitals. These satisfaction ratings are gathered through

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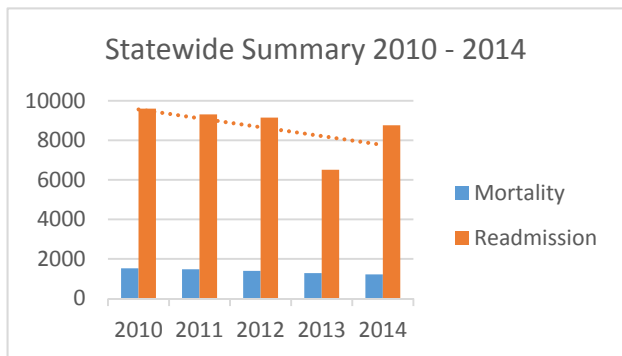
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**Virginia Health Information Publishes Hospital Cardiac Report:**  
Virginia Hospitals Improve Readmission and Mortality Rates (Cont. from page 1)

consumer surveys and are categorized into three sections: communication, comfort and overall ratings for each facility.

While the cardiac care report offers immense benefit to Virginia consumers, true value can also be provided to healthcare professionals by reviewing the mortality and readmission rates for each facility. These rates present an opportunity to function as a benchmark for performance.

In the past five years, mortality and 30-day readmission rates have declined steadily in Virginia—approximately 20% for mortality and 8% for readmissions. Reasons for these declines may include better control of high blood pressure, effective use of medications and more regular follow-up care after hospitalization. It is these and other factors that are providing great opportunity for continued quality of care improvements.



Since 1993, VHI has supported and advocated for health care transparency in Virginia. [Virginia Health Information \(VHI\)](http://www.vhi.org) is the nonprofit organization that businesses, consumers, the Commonwealth of Virginia and health insurance companies come to for health information. VHI publishes reports and consumer guides on health insurance, hospitals, HMOs, nursing facilities, physicians and other topics at [www.vhi.org](http://www.vhi.org). To find the latest updates on health care data and statistics, find and like VHI on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/vahealth](http://www.facebook.com/vahealth).

