

# Is It Really Fair To Penalize Hospitals For Readmissions?

by Skeptical Scalpel, M.D.

As new Medicare rules kick in, some 2,200 hospitals nationwide are facing financial penalties for high 30-day readmission rates for myocardial infarction, congestive heart failure and pneumonia. Medicare payments will be lowered by

as much as 1 percent.

Investigators at the Skeptical Scalpel Institute for Evidence-Based Outcomes and Advanced Research (SSIEBOAR, catchy acronym, don't you think?) have come up with a plan that is certain to lower readmission rates across the

board. Some have said the idea should be patented but the institute is not-for-profit and thus is willing to share.

The solution is quite simple—let the patients die. Yes, death reduces readmission rates for all diseases, not just MI, CHF and pneumonia.

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