Mortality Rates Among Veterans Participating in VA vs. Non-VA Cardiac Rehabilitation Programs

NIRUPAMA KRISHNAMURTHI, MBBS, MPH
DAVID W SCHOPFER, MD, MAS
HUI SHEN, MS
MARY A WHOOLEY, MD

University of California, San Francisco
San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center
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Cardiac rehabilitation (CR) is associated with decreased cardiovascular and all-cause mortality. CR participation rates among veterans are very low (10%). Veterans Health Administration (VA) is trying to expand CR referral.
Background

• VA Choice program allows referral to ‘non-VA’ programs (programs outside the VA)

• Differences in mortality outcomes between VA and non-VA CR programs have not been evaluated
Aims

• To examine if differences exist in mortality outcomes between VA and non-VA CR programs
Methods

• Observational study

• **Data source**: VA Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW)

• **Study population**: patients hospitalized for myocardial infarction (MI), percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) and coronary artery bypass surgery (CABG) at the VA between 2010-14
Methods

- Evidence of CR obtained from CDW ‘Fee Basis’ claims classified as non-VA CR

- CR sessions recorded from the VA Inpatient and Outpatient files categorized as VA CR
Analysis

• Cox proportional hazard regression analysis

• Outcome variable: 12-month mortality
Results

Pending further analysis
Conclusions

• No significant difference in the probability of 12-month mortality between VA and non-VA CR programs

• Our study hopes to inform care practices to increase participation rates in the VA through referral to VA or non-VA CR
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Questions?