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## Does belonging to a regional quality network influence guideline implementation as measured by quality indicators derived from guidelines?

Sophie Calmus, Mélanie Couralet, Christine Gardel, Raymond Le Moign  
*Haute Autorité de Santé, Saint-Denis, Ile-de-France, France*

**Background:** Since 2008, all French acute care hospitals have begun to collect retrospective data on 6 quality indicators (QIs) relating to post-acute phase medical management of patients with myocardial infarction (MI). The QIs were developed by extracting quality criteria from clinical practice guidelines and then selecting those criteria needed to construct the QIs.

**Purpose:** To determine whether hospitals belonging to regional quality networks (RQNs) are better at adopting guidelines and thus have better QI results than those that do not belong. RQNs have a wide variety of activities (provision and creation of quality assessment tools, assisting in practice appraisal, developing and implementing QIs, etc).

**Methods:** A total of 649 hospitals collected data on 6 QIs for 60 random hospital stays (principal diagnosis: MI). Hospitals with <30 stays/year for MI were excluded (n=374). RQN hospitals and non-RQN hospitals were compared using regression models, adjusted for the type of hospital and number of beds.

**Results:** There was no significant difference between RQN hospitals (n=102) and non-RQN hospitals (n=173) (total of 14,966 stays) for any QI ( $p>0.05$ ). (Q1: Aspirin/clopidogrel prescription at discharge, Q2: beta-blocker prescription at discharge, Q3: left ventricular ejection fraction measurement, Q4: prescription of statin at discharge (and monitoring statin use by lipid lab test), Q5: advice on diet, and Q6: advice on stopping smoking).

**Discussion:** Belonging to a RQN had no significant impact on guideline implementation. However, the extent to which a RQN is involved in fostering guideline adoption is difficult to establish as there is no standardized information on RQN missions and work programmes. This problem could be circumvented by including items on RQN activities in the assessment grid. Measuring the compliance of physicians with the guidelines that underpin the QIs by another method might also prove of interest.