

FACTS

Cardiac Rehabilitation

Putting More Patients on the Road to Recovery

OVERVIEW

Each year, over 800,000 Americans die from a coronary event, accounting for 1 of every 3 deaths in the US.¹ However, there is hope. Cardiac rehabilitation (CR) reduces the risk of a future cardiac event by stabilizing, slowing, or even reversing the progression of cardiovascular disease (CVD).² As a result, CR reduces hospital readmissions, as well as all-cause and CVD mortality.^{3,4} Patients with other cardiovascular diseases, such as heart failure can also benefit from CR programs.^{5,6}

Despite its clear and tangible benefits, CR remains underutilized, particularly among women and minorities.^{7,8} A recent report estimated that only 19-34% of patients subsequently participate in a CR program.⁹ A 2015 study reported that just over 20% of eligible Medicare patients with acute myocardial infarction used CR services.¹⁰ more patients and their physicians taking greater advantage of cardiac rehabilitation? Unfortunately, there are many barriers that contribute to low participation rates (Table 1).

Nevertheless, new delivery models, such as automatic in-patient CR referral systems, offer opportunities to address patient barriers and to lower treatment costs^{11,12}. This referral system is one component of the Million Hearts® initiative,¹⁰ as well as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) CR Incentive Payment Model. It is predicted that the Million Hearts® initiative will save

Medicare provides reimbursement for all the