



**Minnesota Hospital Association**

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## What is the AHRQ Lab Project?

In late 2010, the Minnesota Hospital Association (MHA) was awarded a \$1.5 million, 3-year grant from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to compare the effectiveness of alternative inpatient treatment regimens for patients with acute decompensated heart failure (ADHF). The association plans to do so by combining its administrative claims database, which contains medical claims data collected from nearly all Minnesota hospitals for more than two decades with lab data and pharmacy data from hospitals' electronic data repositories.

This isn't the first time that Minnesota hospitals have worked together for the common good. Two years ago, MHA and 15 Minnesota hospitals worked together to merge numerical lab data from those hospitals' electronic data repositories with administrative claims data as part of an AHRQ-funded pilot project. That project demonstrated the practicality and utility of creating clinically-enhanced claims databases to support quality assessment and improvement initiatives by improving the scope and accuracy of risk-adjusted measures of clinical outcomes.

This new project will create the first statewide inpatient database that combines patient-level claims, laboratory and pharmacy data. The information will enable analysts to compare clinical performance and relate risk-adjusted outcomes to drug therapy without costly abstraction of medical records. If successful, this innovative approach to comparative effectiveness research could benefit patients, clinicians, and hospitals throughout the nation.

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