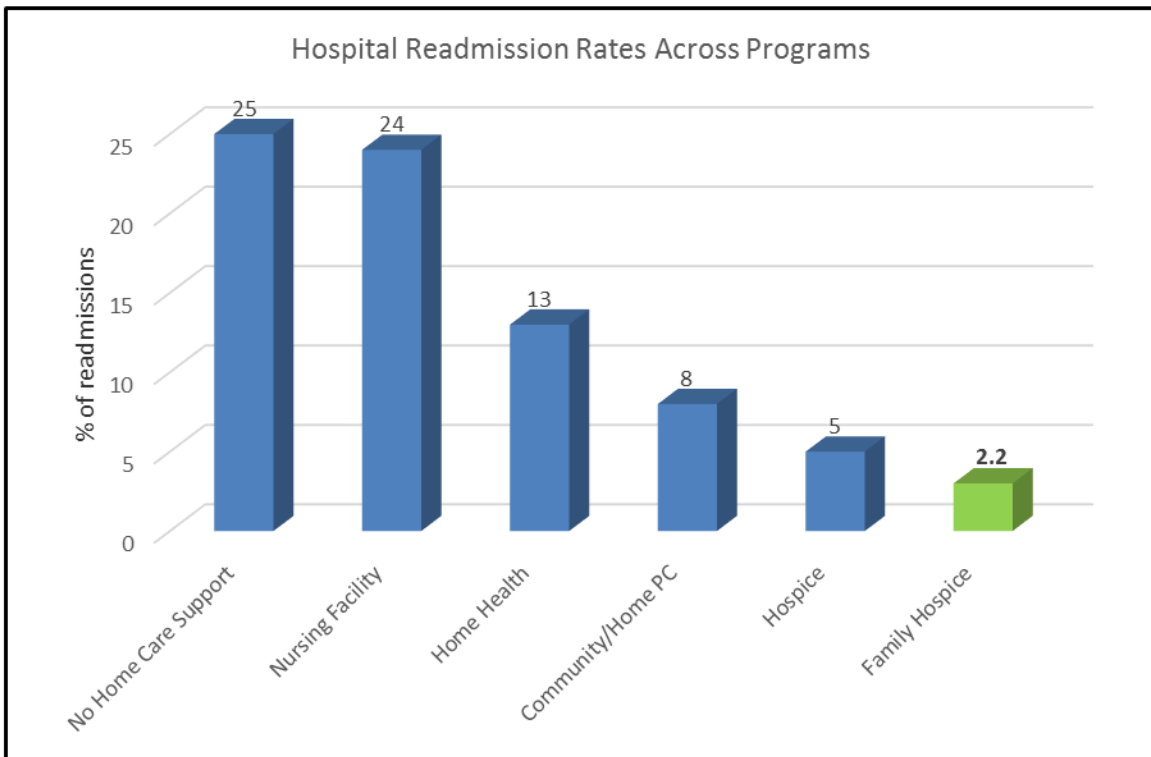




One of the best ways for communities to improve the patient experience and reduce healthcare costs is to reduce hospital readmissions (Center for Healthcare Quality and Reform, 2014). Unnecessary hospital readmissions can create physical, mental and financial burdens for patients and families and strain the resources of the healthcare system.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has identified avoidable readmissions as one of the leading problems facing the U.S. healthcare system and its patients. The cost of hospital readmissions for Medicare patients is \$26 billion annually; more that \$17 billion is spent on readmissions that need not happen if patients and caregivers receive the right care once they leave the hospital (Robert Woods Johnson Foundation, 2013).

Patients enrolled in a hospice program see significantly reduced rates of hospital readmission, as the figures below demonstrate. Family Hospice and Palliative Care's readmission rate is better than other programs and better than the national average for hospice.



Source: National Palliative Care Research Center and 2014 FHPC data