


This issue of *JAMA Internal Medicine* describes another such experience.⁶ The Postmortem Systematic Investigation of Sudden Cardiac Death study, led by investigators at the University of California, San Francisco, and funded by the National Institutes of Health, has provided a unique opportunity to investigate the cause of death among all adults experiencing sudden cardiac death in the San Francisco area, including those with pacemakers and implantable cardioverter defibrillators. The results of device interrogation and autopsies suggested that substantial proportions of adults with these high-risk medical devices experienced cardiac causes of death, including the ventricular arrhythmic events that these devices are intended to prevent. These findings of previously unsuspected device malfunction and ineffectiveness are critical to the accurate understanding of the benefits and risks of these implanted devices. We anticipate that this study will motivate other cities and health care systems to investigate the cause of death in patients with implanted cardiac medical devices. Our medical device post-market safety surveillance system needs strengthening, which requires more data and better reporting, so that questions like this one can be identified and resolved quickly and the safety of the medical devices on which patients and physicians depend can be assured.

**Conflict of Interest Disclosures:** Dr Ross reported receiving research grant funding through Yale University from the US Food and Drug Administration to develop methods for postmarket medical device surveillance and from Medtronic plc and Johnson & Johnson to develop methods for clinical trial data sharing. No other disclosures were reported.


