

Improving diagnosis in health care

Why now?

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Error in diagnosis (IOM)

The failure to:

(a) establish an accurate and timely explanation of the patient's health problem(s)

or

(b) communicate that explanation to the patient.

**How many of you have experienced such
an error?**

Some numbers

5-15% annually

>12 million each year

Life-time risk near certain

Why should we care **now?**

Errors in diagnosis have increasingly larger clinical consequences

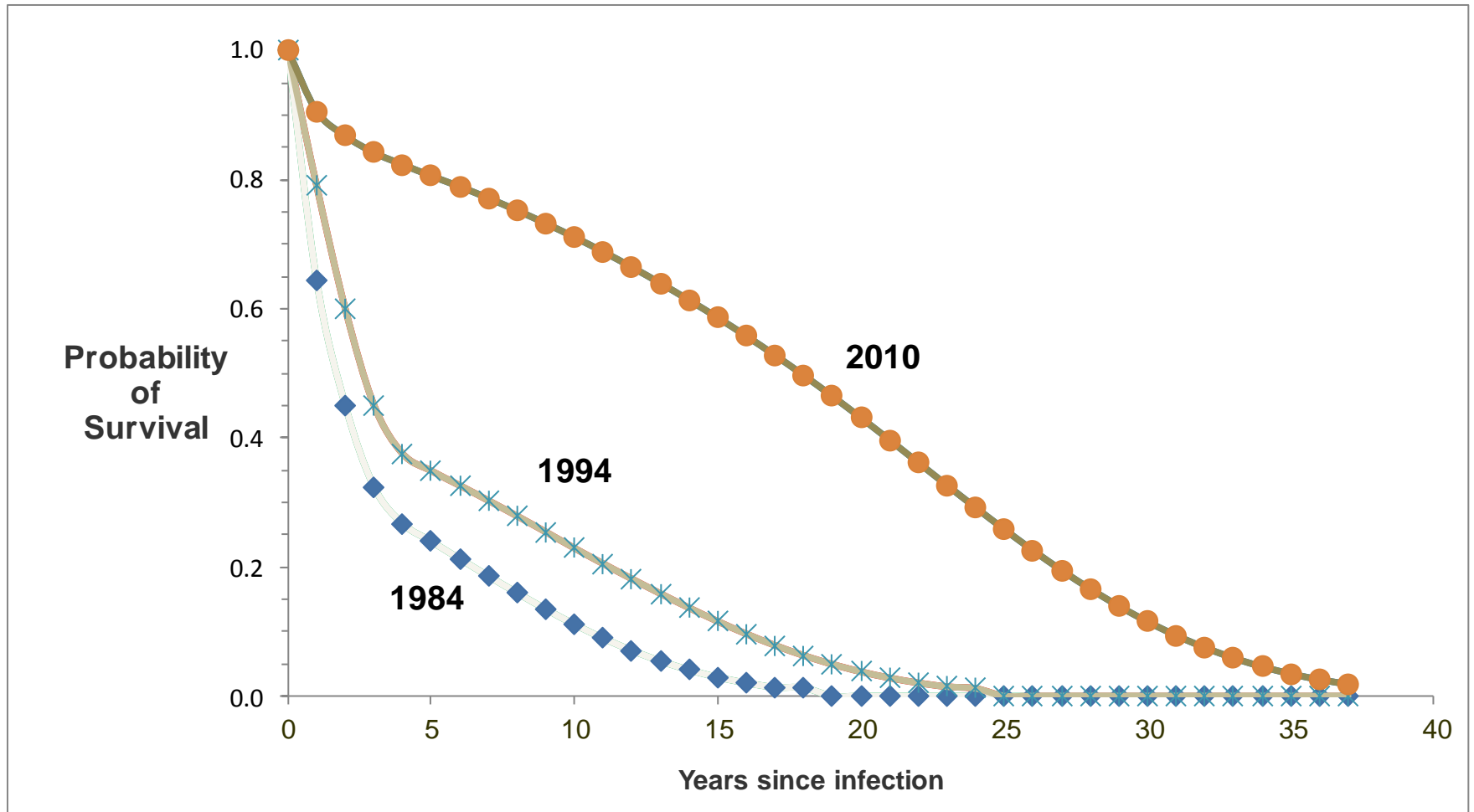


Changes in the Management of Acute Coronary Syndromes since 1955.

Year	Bed Rest	Coronary Care Unit	Thrombolytic Agents and Angioplasty	Anticoagulant Agents	Postinfarction Treatment	Postinfarction Risk of Reinfarction*
1955	6 wk	No	No	Yes	None	1.00
1980	2 wk	Yes	No	Yes	Aspirin, beta-blockers	0.69
2005	Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	Aspirin, beta-blockers, angiotensin-converting-enzyme inhibitors, statins, clopidogrel	0.48

* Data are from an analysis of the Framingham Study, in which the period 1950 through 1969 was used as the reference period.

Failure to diagnose HIV has different implications now



In addition to larger clinical consequences, there are larger **cost implications**.

Errors of diagnosis arguably have
larger ‘**spillover**’ effects now

Resistant infections
Hepatitis C
Ebola