



## MAYO CLINIC HEALTH POLICY CENTER

*Building a vision for health care in America*



### December 2009

#### E-mail News

[Subscribe](#) to periodic updates from the Health Policy Center.

#### About the Health Policy Center

The Mayo Clinic Health Policy Center is convening national thought leaders in a series of events to help develop a new consensus-driven vision for health care in America.

[About](#) the center.

#### Health Policy Center Blog

Mayo Clinic [Health Policy Center Blog](#) offers updates of Health Policy Center activities and an opportunity to keep the health care reform conversation going. In addition, the blog contains links to presentations from and webcasts of events.

#### Mayo Clinic Perspectives on Health Care Reform

*Public option does not improve access, quality or affordability*

At this juncture, Mayo Clinic will neither endorse nor oppose entire bills in the House or Senate, but will continue to point out provisions that we think move the country toward patient-centered health care that improves access, quality and affordability for all patients.

Many provisions passed in the House and currently in the Senate bill are aligned with our recommendations, including:

- Provisions to pay for value in health care
- An insurance exchange
- Individual mandate
- Subsidies for people to achieve coverage
- Pilot projects on accountable care organizations and bundling of payments

However, Mayo Clinic remains concerned about a "Medicare-like" public option. We believe the goals of improved access, quality and affordability can be achieved through an insurance exchange without a public option.

Read our latest [Perspective on Health Care Reform](#).

#### Mayo Clinic President and CEO Denis Cortese, M.D., Retires

Denis Cortese, M.D., retired from Mayo Clinic on Nov. 20 and is succeeded by John Noseworthy, M.D. After his retirement, Dr. Cortese will focus his attention on a variety of opportunities to improve the health care delivery system. Soon, Dr. Cortese will spend time working with Arizona State University (ASU), where he will lead its new Healthcare Delivery and Policy Program. At ASU, Dr. Cortese will be joined by Bob Smoldt, former Mayo Clinic chief administrative officer, who continues to work part time for the Mayo Clinic Health Policy Center. Together, they will focus on health care delivery changes that result in higher-value health care, as well as the role of public policy in delivery system reform.

Dr. Cortese will also continue to chair the Roundtable on Evidence-Based Medicine at the Institute of Medicine and will join the RAND Corporation's Health Board of Advisors. Dr. Cortese will stay involved in the design and implementation of health care reform and remains supportive of Mayo Clinic Health Policy Center's reform efforts under the direction of the center's executive director, Jeff Korsmo.

#### Health Reform News

## **The Battle Over Rewarding Efficient Providers** [Health Affairs Blog](#)

John Wennberg and Shannon Brownlee discuss the controversy over a proposed study of regional variations in Medicare spending. Wennberg and Brownlee rebut claims that spending and utilization variations among academic medical centers are due to differences in patient income, race and health status.

**New Resources on the Health Reform Debate from Kaiser**  
[Kaiser Family Foundation](#), a great resource for all things health care reform, has issued new and updated resources to reflect provisions in the Reid bill currently under consideration in the Senate.

**New Info on Differences in Medical Services by Region**  
MedPAC (the nonpartisan Medicare Payment Advisory Commission) released an analysis of regional variation in service use. This analysis is different from the Dartmouth Atlas study. Dartmouth Atlas measures total Medicare spending. This report adjusted total Medicare spending by removing differences in Medicare payment rates. The amount Medicare pays for a given service varies based on factors in the payment formulas, such as geographic indexing, add-ons for teaching hospitals and others.  
[Read MedPAC's analysis.](#)

**Great Expectations for U.S. Health Care**  
Health care is one of the largest and most complex challenges facing cities and states. At the Smarter Cities Conference in New York on Oct. 1, Denis Cortese, M.D., discussed new opportunities for innovation within health care.  
[Watch video of his talk.](#)

Following those remarks, Garrick Utley, The State University of New York, moderated a conversation with Dr. Cortese.  
[Watch video.](#)

**Join Health Care Repair**  
[Health Care Repair](#), a project of the Mayo Clinic Health Policy Center, is building a movement for major change in the way health care is delivered and paid for in America. Join the effort.

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13400 East Shea Blvd  
Scottsdale, AZ 85259

**Mayo Clinic**  
4500 San Pablo Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32224

200 First St. SW  
Rochester, MN 55905