



Health Watch USA Newsletter

www.healthwatchusa.org April 5th, 2012

Member of the National Quality Forum and a designated "Community Leader" for Value-Driven Healthcare by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

MedPAC calls for Hospital Payment Cuts.

The Medicare Payment Advisory called for payment cuts to hospitals. Specifically, for outpatient doctor visits which cost 80% more in the hospital than a free-standing doctor's office. Such cuts will save an estimated \$1 billion dollars each year.

<http://www.fiercehealthfinance.com/story/medpac-urges-sgr-repeal-pay-cut-hospital-doc-visits/2012-03-19>

This discrepancy is caused by the ability of a hospital to bill a facility fee, even at satellite offices. This was a topic of a recent Health Watch USA Op-Ed.

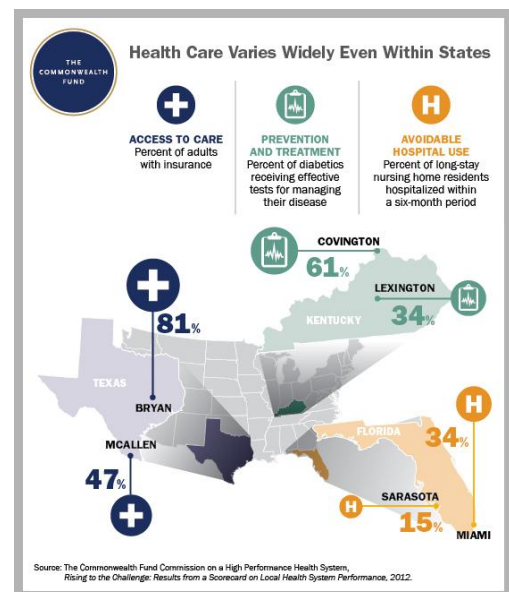
<http://www.kentucky.com/2012/03/01/2089879/ky-voices-more-doctors-controlled.html>

Health Care Varies Widely Within Each State.

Kentucky was highlighted by the Commonwealth Fund. Only 34% of patients in Lexington were reported receiving effective tests for the prevention and treatment of their diabetes. In Covington, Ky this figure is 61%.

<http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Blog/2012/Mar/From-the-Ground-Up.aspx>

(Click on Picture to Enlarge)



Consumer Reports: Some Medical Devices are Dangerous and Never Tested for Safety

<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/consumer-reports-magazine/May-2012/medical-devices.html>

American Cancer Society: Cancer Risks Associated with External Radiation for Diagnostic Imaging.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.3322/caac.21132/abstract>

Almost 50% of Cancer Research Does Not Hold Up

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/28/us-science-cancer-idUSBRE82R12P20120328?feedType=RSS&feedName=healthNews>

Report From the Union of Concerned Scientists

This report describes methods of adverse influence of special interest groups on scientific research.

http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/scientific_integrity/how-corporations-corrupt-science.pdf

Health Care Costs are on the Rise for Patients.

Healthcare Reform Costs May be Twice as Much as Originally Predicted

CBO states the full accounting of the Healthcare Reform Bill may cost 2.6 trillion dollars.

<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/03/14/cbo-health-law-estimate-shows-much-higher-spending-beyond-first-10-years/>

Hospitals Demand Payment Upfront from Non-emergent ER Patients

<http://www.kaiserhealthnews.org/stories/2012/february/19/hospitals-demand-payment-upfront-from-er-patients.aspx>

Healthcare Costs Continue to Rise

The cost of an average premium predicted to equal the average family income by 2033. Healthcare reform under favorable conditions will extend this date by only 4 years. In 2012, the current average family premium is over 25% of the average family income.

<http://www.annfammed.org/content/10/2/156.full.pdf+html>

Hospital Systems Continue to Integrate and Collaborate

Another Large Hospital System is Born.

<http://www.fiercehealthcare.com/story/hospitals-retain-independence-amid-statewide-collaboration/2012-04-02>

Largest Commercial ACO Results are Promising

Drop in Hospital admissions by 10.6% and ER visits by 5.4%

<http://www.fiercehealthcare.com/story/largest-commercial-aco-earns-early-results/2012-03-12>

ACOs and Healthcare Economics

ACOs are not the same as HMOs. There are two major differences. Patients may choose any provider they wish and the providers will share in a percentage of the profits.

<http://www.fiercehealthcare.com/story/acos-changing-economics/2012-03-14>

Cow Map Develops Legs.

The Cow Map -- MRSA Parody has been featured by William Heisel in two different "Antidote" Blog Posts on the University of Southern California's website "Reporting on Health".



Spotting MRSA and Other Superbugs:

<http://www.reportingonhealth.org/blogs/2012/03/21/herd-immunity-spotting-mrsa-and-other-uperbugs-should-be-easy-mapping-cows>

Better Definitions Better Data:

<http://www.reportingonhealth.org/blogs/2012/03/23/herd-immunity-better-definitions-and-better-data-could-help-stop-superbugs>

Pressure Ulcers are a Major Reservoir of MRSA Bacteria

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/760335?src=mp&spon=14>

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