

The Health Care Delivery System
ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Introduction

To enjoy optimal health—as individuals and as a population, people must have the benefit of high-quality health care services that are effectively coordinated within a strong public health system. In considering the role of the health care sector in assuring the nation's health, the committee took as its starting point one of the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) report *Crossing the Quality Chasm* (2001b: 6): “All health care organizations, professional groups, and private and public purchasers should adopt as their explicit purpose to continually reduce the burden of illness, injury, and disability, and to improve the health and functioning of the people .

Definition

**It is a plan aims to achieve •
better performance on the
six dimensions of this
system .**

Dimensions

1 – Safety : avoiding injury & harm from care that is meant to aid patients .

2 – Effectiveness : assuring that “evidence-based “care is actually delivered by avoiding overuse of medically unproven care & underuse of medically sound care (proper care).

3 – Patient-centeredness : involving patients thoroughly in their care decision-making process , thereby respecting their culture , social circumstances , and needs .

4 – Timeliness : avoiding unwanted delays in treatment .

5 – Efficiency

6 – Equity : closing racial , ethnic , gender , and socioeconomic gaps in care .

Health insurance coverage is associated with several factors such as

- 1. Better health outcomes for adults.**
- 2. Having a regular source of care**
- 3. Greater and more appropriate use of health services.**

The effectiveness of these factors

They improve :-

1. The likelihood of disease screening
2. Early detection
3. The management of chronic illness
4. The effective treatment of acute conditions," IOM notes in a recent report (IOM, 2002a: 6 -).

Adequate population health cannot be achieved without

- 1. Making comprehensive health care.**
- 2. Making affordable health care available •
to every person residing**

The responsibility of the federal government

- 1. Leading a national effort**
- 2. Examining the options available .**
- 3. Achieving stable health care coverage of individuals and families.**
- 4. Assuring the implementation of plans to achieve that result (adequate population health).**

Strategies for the HCSR

A- Infrastructure :

1 – Health information technology :-

a – Promote the use of electronic health records .

b – Direct action to safeguard the privacy of electronic health information .

2 – Workforce :-

a – Invest in scholarship & loan repayment programs for newly trained health care providers .

b – Improving capacity in nursing education .

c – Strengthen training & licensing standards for geriatric care .

d – Enact strategies to increase wages & benefits for direct care workers .

3 – Information :-

a – Provide governmental support for comparative effectiveness research .

B – Develop a local strategy for the dissemination (publishing) & application of comparative effectiveness research.

4 – Organization of health care delivery : -

a – Encourage the adaption of information technologies .

b – Provide government oversight (supervision) of accountable care organizations to ensure basic protections to the public .

Strategies for the HCSR

B- Quality of care :

1 – Improving individual care :

a – Encourage public-private payer cooperation that will specify , enforce , and support care improvements .

b – Increase funding for the healthcare research & quality .

c – Hold hospital boards legally accountable for quality & safety improvements .

d – Support no – fault malpractice demonstration projects .

2 – Population health :

Enact (legislation) comprehensive tobacco control policies , including a federal smoke-free policy , increased tobacco taxes , warning labels , counter-marketing strategies , smoking cessation efforts .

3 – Patient activation :

a – Support self-management through benefit design such as using financial incentives for patients to encourage the use of care that is proven to be effective & discourage care that has less evidence for efficacy .

b – Promote provider support for patient-centered care .

c – Reduce obesity.

Approaches to reduce obesity

Through policies such as

- 1. Updating nutritional standards for school lunches**
- 2. Expanding social marketing**
- 3. Eliminating “food desserts”**
- 4. Promoting physical activity through workplaces and schools**

Factors Affecting Health-Care Delivery

Identifying barriers to health care is important because of the negative effects of postponing assessment and treatment of health problems.

Finances

- **In almost every list of barriers preventing people from receiving health care in the United States, cost ranks first or near the top. People without insurance coverage are more likely to wait until their illness has become less treatable. Even with insurance, some cannot afford the medicines they need or co-payments.**

If baby-sitting costs or reduced pay because of time off from work are too big a financial burden, access to medical care also suffers.

Language

Persons who have limited English proficiency are less likely to have a regular source of primary care and less likely to receive preventive care. They also are less satisfied with the care that they do receive and are more likely to report problems with care.

The inability to understand the instructions a person receives from care providers increases the possibility that they will not properly take prescribed medicines or follow treatment plans.

Geography

One-fourth of the U.S. population lives in rural areas. Compared with urban Americans, rural residents have higher poverty rates, a larger percentage of elderly, tend to be in poorer health and face more difficulty getting to health services. The circumstance of where you live has a significant overall effect on the number of primary-care doctors, specialists, hospitals and other health resources available. In rural communities, lack of transportation and distance to an emergency room or a hospital can be important barriers to receiving prompt treatment. Local communities find it difficult to obtain and keep medical and dental practitioners. Specialty services, such as treatments for rare diseases or expensive diagnostic equipment, are another area where lack of available resources is a concern.

4 -Personal and Ethnic Beliefs

If you think medical providers will discriminate against treating you appropriately because of your race, religion, gender, ethnicity or country of origin, you are less likely to seek care in a timely fashion.