Health

Reimagining Health Policy Research:
Collaborative Partnerships and Evidence-Based Solutions to Transform Health Care

We evaluate programs, summarize policy implications, identify solutions, and improve programs using the most current and effective methods, data collection, and analysis. This work is disseminated in more than 100 reports, articles, and other publications that we produce each year, as well as through presentations to professional societies, clients, and decision makers. Driven by broad-based public interest in finding ways to improve the quality, efficiency, affordability, and equity of health care, Mathematica has made significant contributions to the body of research and data in care delivery and financing, quality measures, and health systems change.

State health policy

Many states have developed initiatives to expand access and coverage, while controlling costs to ensure that health care is affordable. We help support these initiatives by assessing the affordability, accessibility, and quality of health insurance expansion and payment reform options, tailoring our analyses to each state's unique demographic, economic, and health care environment. This includes our analyses of the effect the Affordable Care Act may have on a variety of areas such as public health programs and small businesses. We also analyze cost drivers in private insurance markets to help states deal with increases in premiums. As states turn to wellness and prevention programs to encourage healthier lifestyles and prevent disease, we have examined the effectiveness of these initiatives.

Recent state health projects

Pennsylvania Rural Health Model Technical Assistance and Analytics

National Academy of State Health Policy (NASHP) Supporting Effective State Transparency Laws

Maryland Performance based Payment Methodologies Technical Assistance

California Dental Transformation Initiative Program and Medically Tailored Meals Pilot Program

Vermont Statewide analytics to support the All-Payer Accountable Organization Model

Medicaid and CHIP

Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) help provide coverage for low-income adults and children. We have examined outcomes for individuals eligible for Medicaid benefits and evaluated federal demonstration programs such as Money Follows the Person and Medicaid Managed Care. We have assessed how Medicaid, CHIP, and county-level programs cover and enroll low-income families and promote access to care. This includes three national evaluations of CHIP and assessments of how states decide to modify these programs when budgets are tight. We also provide strategic and technical assistance to Medicaid and CHIP administrators to help them develop, purchase, monitor, and improve their services.

Medicare

Demographic and cost trends have put Medicare on an unsustainable growth path. As a result, the next few years are likely to see important changes to the program. Mathematica staff are conducting a wide range of research and data collection activities to help inform policy makers about the implications of various options. In particular, we are looking at ways to increase the value of health care purchased under Medicare by determining how to improve quality and reduce costs. We are also assessing a range of care delivery options, including new care management strategies, the Medicare Advantage program, and Accountable Care Organizations. We also study how to best meet the needs of vulnerable Medicare beneficiaries who are also eligible for Medicaid—the so-called "dual eligibles."

Formative evaluation for vulnerable populations

Policymakers often judge the health care system by how well it serves specific groups. Our studies support these assessments by exploring vulnerable populations' use of health care services including mental and behavioral health services; the underlying social and systemic issues that increase vulnerability and disparities; and the effectiveness of programs and services for women, infants, children, low-income families, racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, frail elderly people, those with chronic diseases, military families and veterans, and incarcerated individuals. We have identified system and market features that promote access to care and better health, address long-term support services, and reduce disparities.

Quality measurement and testing

As the demand for evidence on the effectiveness of medical treatments has increased, we have helped develop and measure care quality and consumer satisfaction. Sound measurement is central to these strategies, and we have developed, tested, validated, and analyzed quality measures and have designed and evaluated pay-for-performance programs and public reporting of quality data. We have also sought ways to measure disparities accurately and have assessed the composition of the health care workforce and the function of safety net providers.

Care delivery systems

We have been a leader in studying new models for health care delivery aimed at organizing and managing health care more effectively. These models include medical homes, primary care redesign, Accountable Care Organizations, care coordination,

and disease management. Also, we have studied the use of health information technology (HIT) to monitor and improve care, specifically examining whether hospitals have met "meaningful use" criteria set by federal HIT laws.

Value-based purchasing evaluations

Our work addresses ways to achieve the triple aim of better health, better care, and more affordable care. We have helped Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP design payment reform programs to increase the value delivered by the health care system and measure quality of care so that steps can be taken to reward high-quality providers. We have studied these issues from a range of perspectives, including those of individuals, employers, providers, and government.

To learn more about State Health policy, contact Sule Gerovich, Director of state health policy, sgerovich@mathematica-mpr.com, (410) 907-0843.

About Us

For 50 years, Mathematica staff have been informing health policy debates and addressing decision makers' information needs regarding longstanding issues, such as covering the uninsured, measuring and improving health care quality, controlling health care costs, and designing efficient and effective delivery systems to meet the diverse needs of the population. Mathematica's team of health researchers continues to provide reliable data and analysis on the effectiveness of health care investments, and helps policymakers improve their programs.

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