Payers Identify Hospitals As The Primary Source Of Healthcare Reform Funding

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While physicians point to prescription drugs

New KantarHealth Research Shows Physicians and Payers Agree They Donâ€™t Support the Reforms but Disagree on the Source of Funding

Responding to President Obamaâ€™s claim that funding for proposed US healthcare reforms exists within the current system, payers and physicians have different views on where the savings will be found to support the new initiatives.

According to new KantarHealth research, payers believe that reducing what Obama called "waste, fraud and abuse" in hospital care will provide the majority of needed funding, while physicians point to prescription drugs as the prime source of potential savings.

"Physiciansâ€™ responses naming prescription drugs as the key savings source reinforces a troubling trend we uncovered earlier this year in the US through our TRI*MTM measure of relationship strength," says Steven Mackey, Global Account Director at KantarHealth.

"Our 2009 TRI*M research reveals the percent of US doctors highly dissatisfied with pharma and actively generating negative word of mouth jumped from 12% to 19%-the first time ever that weâ€™ve seen a negative pattern among American physicians. Never before have US pharma companies had to face this kind of difficult market environment."

Although payers and physicians donâ€™t see eye to eye on the funding source, they are in synch when it comes to their reactions to the proposal.

When asked if they agreed with Obamaâ€™s proposed healthcare reforms, 50% of payers and 42% of physicians say they do not support the proposal.

In addition, almost 30% of both groups believe they still need more information before making a decision.

Physicians Worry More Than Payers about How Reforms Will Impact Their Practices
Physicians are more concerned than payers about the effects of healthcare reforms, with 57% believing the proposal would have a negative impact on their businesses.

About a quarter of physicians believe the impact would be positive-and just over 20% donâ€™t think they would feel any effects, if the proposal is adopted.

Fewer than half of payers share doctorsâ€™ concerns that the reforms would negatively impact their businessesâ€”and more than a quarter donâ€™t expect to see any effect at all.

Similar to physicians, about a quarter of payers expect a positive business outcome from the reforms.

The reasons doctors report greater concern may be captured in the words of one physician specialist who worried that "...with the chronic shortage and [unequal] distribution of primary care doctors, who is going to take care of these new patients?" This issue was echoed by many other doctors, who cited the need for a "dramatic increase in the training of primary care physicians, especially in family medicine."

Although most doctors are worried, many do agree on the benefit the reforms could provide, such as supporting better preventive care and decreasing the use of expensive emergency room services.

One obstetrician described the expected effects of the reforms as allowing physicians to "see more patients in the office, boost preventive care, reduce acute care problems and make office visits and drugs more affordable [for patients]."

Payers and Physicians Share Their Views on Reforms
Findings are based on responses to an on-line survey from 507 physicians and 44 payers in the US.

The survey was conducted in September 2009 with primary care and specialist doctors on the All Global physician panel and medical and pharmacy directors on the KantarHealth payer panel.

About KantarHealth
KantarHealth is the worldâ€™s leading healthcare-focused global consultancy, specializing in portfolio optimization, market access, safety and outcomes, and brand and customer insights.

Formed by uniting Consumer Health Sciences, MattsonJack, TNS Healthcare and Ziment, it is the next-generation decision support partner to the pharmaceutical and biotech industries, delivering evidence-based guidance to support clientsâ€™ global and local success.

With 40+ offices throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and Africa, KantarHealth provides the broadest global footprint, coupled with the strongest local knowledge to help drive clientsâ€™ maximum performance in every geography.

Market-leading solutions ensure optimal decisions and actions across the brand life cycle, from assessing opportunities and sizing marketsâ€¦to developing products and building access strategies-to positioning brands and creating messaging-to managing stakeholder relationships and monitoring treatment outcomes.

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