

Transplantation in ACOs

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KEYWORDS

- Health care reform • Medicare • Accountable Care Organization
- Quality improvement • HMO • Patient Centered Medical Home
- Medicare shared savings program

KEY POINTS

- The United States exhibits subpar health care outcomes compared with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development peer group.
- An urgent need exists to address the excessive cost and unsustainable trajectory of expenditures associated with US health care.
- Health care reform ideas based on the Health Maintenance Organization and Patient-Centered Medical Home concepts are a promising solution to address health care inefficiencies.
- Accountable Care Organizations seek to simultaneously improve quality of care and reduce expenditure.

INTRODUCTION

The 20th century is often described as the “American Century,” for a good reason. In a political and economic sense, the United States dominated the global stage from the early 1900s and achieved a superpower status after the end of World War II and the subsequent Cold War. By the end of the 20th century, America was often held as the best example of a functioning democracy and racial and religious tolerance, and the most fertile home for innovation.

However, the United States was less successful in the area of health care access, outcome, cost, and efficiency compared with the other similarly developed Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. According to the World Health Organization, the United States is trailing its peer group in most outcome and population health metrics, despite spending substantially more per capita than any other nation (**Fig. 1**). In addition, the next 19 wealthiest countries, based on gross domestic product, all gained approximately 6 more years of life expectancy than the

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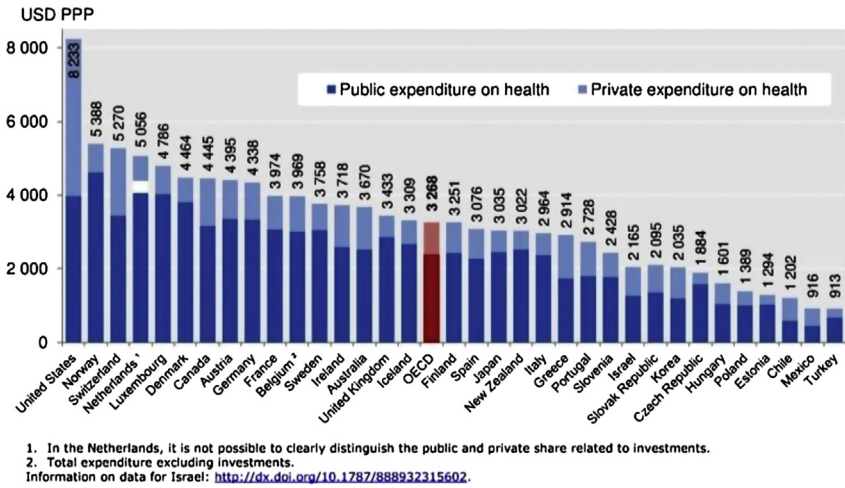


Fig. 1. The United States spends 2.5 times the OECD average on health care: total health expenditure per capita, public and private, 2010 (or nearest year). (Courtesy of The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; with permission. OECD Health Data 2012. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/health/healthdata>. Accessed August 29, 2013.)

Americans since 1970 (Fig. 2). Furthermore, the prestigious Commonwealth Fund ranked the United States last in the quality of health care among comparable countries.¹⁻⁸ Undoubtedly, the United States is different from other nations in many ways: the population is broadly dispersed over a large landmass, which may effect access to health care facilities; obesity is more prevalent; and it has a relatively high

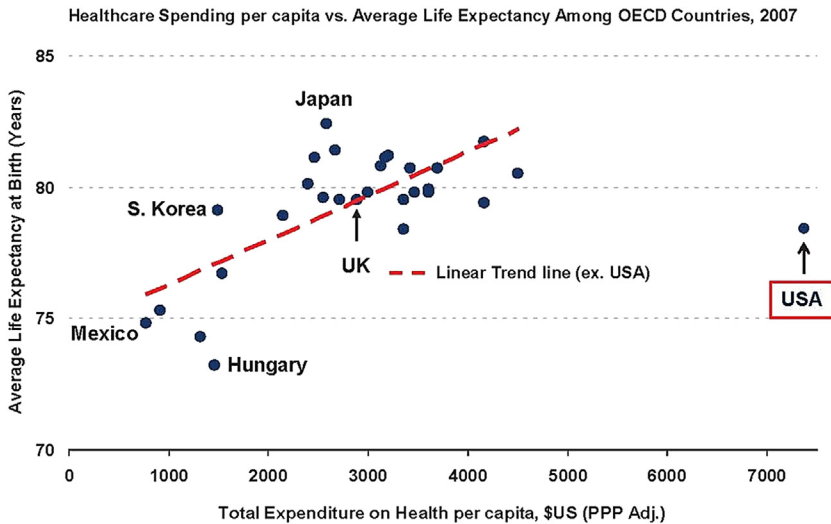


Fig. 2. Life expectancy versus health care spending in 2007. Expenditure in US dollars, corrected for purchasing power parity. (Data from Meeker M. USA Inc. KPCB's Web site. Available at: <http://www.kpcb.com/insights/2011-usa-inc-full-report>. Accessed September 20, 2013.)

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