



New Study Reveals Stalled Progress Toward Value-Based Care

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Third annual study from Quest Diagnostics of health plan executives and physicians suggests physicians need better tools, data access and less complex quality measures to spur adoption

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2018 QUEST DIAGNOSTICS STUDY FINDS:

- Physicians and health plan executives agreed healthcare has made little progress toward value-based care since last year – more than two-thirds (67 percent) of physicians and health plan executives said the U.S. still has a fee-for-service system.
- Fifty-seven percent of health plan executives said they now believe physicians **do not** have the tools to succeed under value-based care, up significantly from 45 percent in last year's study.
- Only 39 percent of physicians said electronic health records (EHRs) provide all the data they need to care for their patients.
- Eighty percent of health plan executives said they believe investments made in technology for quality initiatives have improved the value of healthcare for patients, but only 68 percent of physicians agreed.
- Survey also provides new insights into perceptions of the role of consumer-based healthcare and IT-related technologies in advancing value-based care, including artificial intelligence and blockchain.

A new study of physicians and health plan executives suggests that progress toward value-based care has stalled, and it may have even taken a step backward over the past year. The study, commissioned by Quest Diagnostics (NYSE: DGX), points to physicians' lack of tools and insufficient information about their patients as possible reasons. Other barriers include continuing misalignment of perceptions of physicians and health plan executives, particularly regarding the usefulness of quality metrics and technology in providing patient care.

"Stalled Progress on the Path to Value-Based Care" is the third annual study from Quest Diagnostics to gauge perceptions of physicians and health plan executives about the nation's journey to value-based healthcare, which focuses on care quality and patient outcomes rather than the quantity of services delivered.

To view the study, click [here](#).

The study analyzes results from a survey of 451 primary care physicians and health plan executives collected earlier this year. It also reveals changes in perceptions over the past two years.

Key findings:

- **Physicians and health plan executives agreed healthcare has made little progress toward value-based care since last year, and may even have lost ground.** Among both physicians and health plan executives, more than two-thirds (67 percent) said they believe the U.S. has a fee-for-service system versus a value-based care system (27 percent). In last year's study, those numbers were 63 and 29 percent respectively, which suggests a perception that the healthcare industry has taken a step backward toward fee-for-service.
- **The majority of health plan executives said they now believe physicians do not have the tools to succeed under value-based care, a significant shift from last year when the majority said physicians had the tools.** Fifty-seven percent of health plan executives agreed that physicians do not have the tools to succeed under value-based care, an increase of 12 percentage points from 45 percent in the 2017 study.
- **Both physicians and health plan executives are much less confident that physicians have sufficient information about their patients.** Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of all survey respondents said physicians do not have all the information they need about their patients, an increase of 12 percentage points from the 2017 study. Additionally, only 39

percent of physicians said electronic health records (EHRs) provide all the data they need to care for their patients.

- **Physicians and health plan executives are not aligned, particularly around quality metrics and technology.** When asked "How strongly do you agree or disagree that investments made in technology for quality initiatives have improved the value of healthcare for patients," 80 percent of health plan executives agreed, compared to only 68 percent of physicians—a 12-point delta. Additionally, 62 percent of health plan executives said we've made progress toward alignment between payers and providers, but only 41 percent of physicians agreed.
- **New technologies such as bioinformatics, artificial intelligence and blockchain could be key to improving value-based care.** More than six in 10 of all physicians and health plan executives agreed technologies such as bioinformatics, artificial intelligence, the SMART App Platform, FHIR (Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources) and machine learning have potential to improve value-based care. Almost two-thirds (64 percent) of health plan executives said one advantage of blockchain in healthcare is that it can promote shared data across organizations to surmount interoperability.

The survey also revealed differing perceptions of the usefulness of consumer-based strategies and investments in new technologies versus existing technologies in advancing value-based care.

"While our study suggests the healthcare industry still has a long way to go to deliver value-based care, it reveals avenues to speed the journey," said L. Patrick James, M.D., chief clinical officer, health plans and policy, medical affairs, Quest Diagnostics. "Measures that optimize EHRs, make data more accessible and insightful and reduce complexity of quality measurement are much needed steps to accelerate this transition. First, however, it's clear that health plan executives and physicians need to better align around a shared vision of how technology and data can improve patient care."

"It's encouraging to see that physicians and health plan executives recognize the potential of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain in healthcare, to catalyze the shift to value-based care," said Lidia Fonseca, senior vice president and chief information officer, Quest Diagnostics. "That's a positive sign because it means our industry may be more open to harnessing the power of technology and insights from data to spur important transitions – like the shift to value-based care – than it was just a few years ago."

The study, "Stalled Progress on the Path to Value-Based Care," can be downloaded [here](#).

To download the 2017 study, "Progress on the Path to Value-Based Care," click [here](#).

To download the 2016 study, "Finding a Faster Path to Value-Based Care," click [here](#).

Methodology

Regina Corso Consulting conducted an online survey on behalf of Quest Diagnostics from April 26-May 7, 2018. The survey was conducted among 451 respondents. Of these, 300 were primary care physicians employed in a private practice but who have an affiliation with a hospital and 151 were health plan executives (director-level and above). The margin of error for the full sample was +/- 5 percent.

About Quest Diagnostics

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