

DELIVERING ON THE PROMISE OF PRIMARY CARE

We know that a strong primary care-based health system leads to:

BETTER HEALTH



The evidence shows that access to primary care can help us **live longer, healthier lives.¹**

Studies suggest that as many as **127,617 deaths per year in the United States**

could be averted through an increase in the number of primary care physicians.²

In areas of the country where there are more primary care providers per person,



death rates for cancer, heart disease, and stroke are lower and people are less likely to be hospitalized.^{1,3}

BETTER CARE

Urban and rural communities that have an adequate supply of primary care practitioners experience **lower infant mortality, higher birth weights, and immunization rates at or above national standards despite social disparities.⁴**



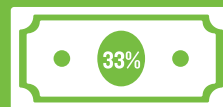
+1 An increase of **one primary care doctor per 10,000 people** can decrease costly and unnecessary care:⁵

- Outpatient visits 5.0%
- ER visits 10.9%
- Inpatient admissions 5.5%
- Surgeries 7.2%

Evidence also shows that **primary care (in contrast to specialty care) is associated with a more equitable distribution of health in populations**, a finding that holds in both cross-national and within-national studies.²

LOWER COST

A primary care-based system may cost less because **patients experience fewer hospitalizations, less duplication, and more appropriate technology.⁴**



U.S. adults who have a primary care physician have

33 percent lower health care costs.¹

Medicare spending is less for states with more primary care physicians and yet these states have more effective, higher-quality care.⁶



BROUGHT TO YOU BY AMERICA'S FAMILY PHYSICIANS

A health system that undervalues primary care has resulted in health care spending that is more than double that of other industrialized countries, yet America ranks 24th out of 30 in life expectancy.⁷

The evidence is clear – and the time to act is now. We can put the health back in health care by making America a place where *Health is Primary*.

¹ The Commonwealth Fund, "Health Reform & You - Primary Care: Our First Line of Defense," 12 June 2013. Available at http://www.commonwealthfund.org/~media/files/publications/health-reform-and-you/health-reform_primary-care_612.pdf

² Starfield, B., L. Shi, and J. Macinko. "Contribution of Primary Care to Health Systems and Health." *The Milbank Quarterly*, 2005. Vol. 83, No. 3. (pp. 457-502). Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2690145/>

³ Macinko, J., B. Starfield, and L. Shi. "Quantifying the Health Benefits of Primary Care Physicians Supply in the United States." *International Journal of Health Services Research*, 2007. Vol. 37, No. 1. (pp. 111-126). Available at http://www.jhsph.edu/sebin/m/n/2007_UHS_Macinko.pdf

⁴ Rosenthal, T. "The Medical Home: The Growing Evidence to Support a New Approach to Primary Care." *Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine*, September-October 2008. Vol. 21, No. 5. Available at <http://www.jabfm.org/content/21/5/427.full.pdf+html>

⁵ Kravet, S.J., A.D. Shore, R. Miller, G.B. Green, K. Kolodner, and S.M. Wright. "Health Care Utilization and the Proportion of Primary Care Physicians." *American Journal of Medicine*, 12 February 2008. Available at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18261503>

⁶ Baicker, K., and A. Chandra. "Medicare spending, the physician workforce, and beneficiaries' quality of care." *Health Affairs*. Available at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15451981>

⁷ OECD 2010, "Health care systems: Getting more value for money"; OECD Economics Department Policy Notes, No. 2. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/economy/growth/46508904.pdf>.