Beat: Lifestyle

UNITED STATES HEALTH CARE FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

DATA FROM THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

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USPA NEWS - In 2013, the U.S. spent far more on health care than these other countries. Higher spending appeared to be largely driven by greater use of medical technology and higher health care prices, rather than more frequent doctor visits or hospital admissions. In contrast, U.S. spending...

'In 2013, the U.S. spent far more on health care than these other countries. Higher spending appeared to be largely driven by greater use of medical technology and higher health care prices, rather than more frequent doctor visits or hospital admissions. In contrast, U.S. spending on social services made up a relatively small share of the economy relative to other countries. Despite spending more on health care, Americans had poor health outcomes, including shorter life expectancy and greater prevalence of chronic conditions.'

'Health care spending in the U.S. far exceeds that of other high-income countries, though spending growth has slowed in the U.S. and in most other countries in recent years. Even though the U.S. is the only country without a publicly financed universal health system, it still spends more public dollars on health care than all but two of the other countries. Americans have relatively few hospital admissions and physician visits, but are greater users of expensive technologies like magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines.'

'Available cross-national pricing data suggest that prices for health care are notably higher in the U.S., potentially explaining a large part of the higher health spending. In contrast, the U.S. devotes a relatively small share of its economy to social services, such as housing assistance, employment programs, disability benefits, and food security. Finally, despite its heavy investment in health care, the U.S. sees poorer results on several key health outcome measures such as life expectancy and the prevalence of chronic conditions. Mortality rates from cancer are low and have fallen more quickly in the U.S. than in other countries, but the reverse is true for mortality from ischemic heart disease.'

'This analysis draws upon data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and other cross-national analyses to compare health care spending, supply, utilization, prices, and health outcomes across 13 high-income countries: Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These data predate the major insurance provisions of the Affordable Care Act.'

Source : The Commonwealth Fund

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