The Commonwealth Fund
2009 International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians in Eleven Countries

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The Commonwealth Fund

November 2009
2009 International Health Policy Survey

- Mail, phone, and e-mail survey of primary care physicians from February to July 2009 in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States

- Samples: 1,016 Australia, 1,401 Canada, 502 France, 715 Germany, 844 Italy, 614 Netherlands, 500 New Zealand, 774 Norway, 1,450 Sweden, 1,062 United Kingdom, and 1,442 United States

- Conducted by Harris Interactive subcontractors, and Dutch Scientific Institute for Quality of Healthcare, Swedish Ministry of Health, Norwegian Knowledge for the Health Services, and Italian Primary Care Physicians Association

- Core Topics: System views and satisfaction, access to care, managing chronic illness, teams, information technology, measuring practice performance, and financial incentives

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Health Information Practice Capacity
Doctors Use Electronic Patient Medical Records*

* Not including billing systems.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Doctors Use Electronic Patient Medical Records in Their Practice, 2006 and 2009*

* 2006: “Do you currently use electronic patient medical records in your practice?”
* 2009: “Do you use electronic patient medical records in your practice (not including billing systems)?”

Source: 2006 and 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
## Practice Use of IT on a Routine Basis for Core Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent reporting ROUTINE:</th>
<th>AUS</th>
<th>CAN</th>
<th>FR</th>
<th>GER</th>
<th>ITA</th>
<th>NET</th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>NOR</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electronic ordering of laboratory tests</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic access to patients’ test results</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic prescribing of medication</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic alerts/ prompts about a potential problem with drug dose/interaction</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic entry of clinical notes</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
# Computerized Capacity to Generate Patient Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent report the COMPUTERIZED capacity to generate:</th>
<th>AUS</th>
<th>CAN</th>
<th>FR</th>
<th>GER</th>
<th>ITA</th>
<th>NET</th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>NOR</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of patients by diagnosis</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of patients by lab result</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of patients who are due or overdue for tests/preventive care</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of all medications taken by an individual patient*</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Including those that may be prescribed by other doctors.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Doctor Routinely Receives Reminders for Guideline-Based Interventions or Screening Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Yes, using a manual system</th>
<th>Yes, using a computerized system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUS</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZ</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITA</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GER</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOR</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Practice Routinely Sends Patients Reminders for Preventive or Follow-Up Care

Percentages may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Practices with Advanced Electronic Health Information Capacity

Percent reporting at least 9 of 14 clinical IT functions*

* Count of 14 functions includes: electronic medical record; electronic prescribing and ordering of tests; electronic access test results, Rx alerts, clinical notes; computerized system for tracking lab tests, guidelines, alerts to provide patients with test results, preventive/follow-up care reminders; and computerized list of patients by diagnosis, medications, due for tests or preventive care.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Access and Barriers to Care
# Doctors’ Perception of Patient Access Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent reporting patients <strong>OFTEN:</strong></th>
<th>AUS</th>
<th>CAN</th>
<th>FR</th>
<th>GER</th>
<th>ITA</th>
<th>NET</th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>NOR</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have difficulty paying for medications or other care</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have difficulty getting specialized diagnostic tests</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience long waiting times to see a specialist</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Insurance Restrictions on Medication or Treatment for Patients Pose Major Time Concerns for Doctors

Percent saying amount of time physician or staff spend getting patients needed medications or treatment due to coverage restrictions is a MAJOR PROBLEM

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Practice Has Arrangement for Patients’ After-Hours Care to See Doctor/Nurse

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Managing Patient Care
Practice Routinely Uses Written Treatment Guidelines, by Condition

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Doctor Routinely Gives Chronically Ill Patients Written Instructions on Managing Care at Home

Percent saying yes, ROUTINELY gives written instructions

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Practice Routinely Gives Patients Written List of All Medications

Percent saying yes, ROUTINELY gives list of all medications

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Practices Use Nonphysician Clinical Staff for Patient Care

Percent reporting practice shares responsibility for managing care, including nurses, medical assistants

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Patient Safety
Does Your Practice Have a Process for Identifying Adverse Events and Taking Follow-Up Action?

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Performance Reviews, Benchmarks, and Reporting
Practice Routinely Receives and Reviews Data on Patient Clinical Outcomes

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Practice Routinely Receives and Reviews Data on Patient Satisfaction and Experience

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Practice Routinely Receives Data Comparing Clinical Performance to Other Practices

* Question asked differently in Italy.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Time Spent Reporting or Meeting Regulations Is a Major Problem

Percent said amount of time spent reporting clinical information or meeting regulatory requirements is a MAJOR PROBLEM

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Use of Financial Incentives for Quality Improvement
# Financial Incentives and Targeted Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent can receive financial incentives* for:</th>
<th>AUS</th>
<th>CAN</th>
<th>FR</th>
<th>GER</th>
<th>ITA</th>
<th>NET</th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>NOR</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High patient satisfaction ratings</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving clinical care targets</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing patients w/ chronic disease or complex needs</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced preventive care activities**</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding non-physician clinicians to practice</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Non-face-to-face interactions with patients</em></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Including bonuses, special payments, higher fees, or reimbursements.
** Including patient counseling or group visits.
*** Question not asked in Italy survey.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Doctors Can Receive Any Financial Incentives

Percent who can receive any financial incentives for targeted care or meeting goals*

* Can receive financial incentives for any of six: high patient satisfaction ratings, achieve clinical care targets, managing patients with chronic disease/complex needs, enhanced preventive care (includes counseling or group visits), adding nonphysician clinicians to practice and non-face-to-face interactions with patients. Italy not asked non-face-to-face.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
System Views
## Physician Views of Health System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent saying*</th>
<th>AUS</th>
<th>CAN</th>
<th>FR</th>
<th>GER</th>
<th>ITA</th>
<th>NET</th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>NOR</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only minor changes are needed</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamental changes are needed</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System needs to be completely rebuilt</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Respondents asked which statement expresses their overall view of their country’s health system: only minor changes are needed; fundamental changes are needed; system needs to be completely rebuilt.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Physician Satisfaction with Practicing Medicine

Percent*

* The other responses were somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
## Physician Views of the Quality of Care Their Patients Get Throughout the Health Care System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% saying quality of care in past three years has</th>
<th>AUS</th>
<th>CAN</th>
<th>FR</th>
<th>GER</th>
<th>ITA</th>
<th>NET</th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>NOR</th>
<th>SWE</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stayed the same</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Become worse</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2009 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians.
Summary and Implications

- Wide differences across countries in access, information systems, teams, and incentives to improve
  - Arrangements for after-hours care vary significantly
- Leading countries on Health Information Technology have broad functional capacity but different emphases
- Chronic care and teams: new roles and emerging care models
- Patient safety lags behind in primary care
- Primary care doctors often lack feedback on performance
- Payment incentives are increasingly used to encourage quality
- U.S. Concerns: U.S. stands out for reporting cost-related access problems, lack of after-hours care, and lag in IT adoption
Opportunities to Learn

• Country patterns reflect strategic policy choices and extent to which policies are national in scope
  – Coverage and benefit design
  – Payment and information for quality and care management
  – IT: investing in primary care capacity and connectivity
  – After-hours access
  – Chronic disease management and use of teams

• Primary care “redesign” is central to international initiatives to improve health care system performance
  – Shared principles but different approaches

• Rich opportunities to learn as countries seek to transform primary care and develop patient-centered, integrated care systems
Acknowledgements and Cofounders

Thanks to coauthors M. M. Doty, D. Squires, J. Peugh, and S. Applebaum, and to Harris Interactive, Inc., and contractors for conducting the survey. Published by *Health Affairs* as, “A Survey of Primary Care Physicians in Eleven Countries, 2009: Perspectives on Care, Costs, and Experiences,” Web Exclusive, Nov. 5, 2009, w1171–w1183.

Cofounders

- Canada: Health Council of Canada, Ontario Quality Council, Quebec Health Commission
- France: Haute Autorité de Santé (HAS), Caisse Nationale d'Assurance Maladie des Travailleurs Salariés (CNAMTS)
- Germany: Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care (IQWiG)
- Italy: Italian Primary Care Physicians Association
- Netherlands: Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and IQ Health, Radboud University Nijmegen
- Norway: Norwegian Knowledge Centre for the Health Services
- Sweden: Swedish Ministry of Health
- United Kingdom: Health Foundation