Implications for the Wider Health System. Conclusions from the Research Literature. The New Institutional Context: Primary Care Organisations In The 1990s. Within New Zealand, the New Zealand Health Strategy (Minister of Health, 2001b) and the Primary Health Care Strategy (Minister of Health 2001c) are evidence of attempts to develop more equitable policies. We primarily view differences in access as arising from socio-economic differences in wealth and pay less attention to geographic variations in access, which, undoubtedly, are also important (Joseph and Phillips 1984). Throughout the implementation period there has been an uneasy relationship between the Minister of Health and GPs, who are represented by IPAC and the New Zealand Medical Association. Several OECD health systems report patient experience data in primary care at annual or other regular intervals, whereas the DANPEP survey of general practice patients in Denmark is neither systematic (across all regions) or regular. Patient experience data should also be reported in a way that is comparable internationally. Sweden, Norway and 17 other primary care systems benchmark patient satisfaction through the OECD’s Health Care Quality Indicators project, but Denmark is not one of them. Work to harmonise these indicators should be undertaken, otherwise Denmark loses the opportunity to co

The U.S. health care system’s uneasy relationship with primary care

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Abstract

Background: The main purpose of this essay is to review the role of primary care in the U.S. health care system and assess the probability that health reform will lead to greater emphasis on primary care.

Methods: The author conducted a literature review to present an historical analysis of policies designed to increase the availability and use of primary care in the U.S.

Results: Despite widespread agreement that the use of primary care should be expanded, U.S. policies have encouraged the growth of a system that relies predominantly on specialty care. The 2010 health reform law includes several provisions designed to increase the availability and use of primary care, but the new Congress has threatened to delay the law’s implementation.

Conclusions: As concepts, primary care and prevention enjoy nearly universal support in the U.S., but the reality does not match the rhetoric.

Keywords

Primary care; Prevention; Patient protection and affordable care act; Managed care.

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