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Nearly 70 Percent of Americans Lack Faith in Traditional Primary Care Model, PartnerMD Survey Finds

Limited Access to Doctors, Uncertainty Over Health Reform Fuel Rise in Concierge Alternative

RICHMOND, Va. – Americans are deeply skeptical that the predominant system for the delivery of health care in the United States—through the traditional primary-care physician model—will remain viable into the future, according to an independent survey commissioned by [PartnerMD](#), a national membership-based medical provider.

Sixty-nine percent of respondents expressed worry about the future of the traditional primary-care model, while also revealing anxiety over the effects of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and severe limitations impacting their contact with doctors. The survey is among the first of its kind to measure concern over the impact of the ACA on patient care in conjunction with current system conditions.

“As new health care regulations shine more light on the traditional primary care model, faults within the existing system are becoming more exposed,” PartnerMD CEO Linda Nash said. “This survey confirms that Americans are wary about the future.”

The top two reasons driving the concern about the current system include rising health care costs and new health care regulations, with **51 percent** and **23 percent** citing those factors as most troublesome respectively. Only **10 percent** of survey respondents felt the ACA will positively affect their care and **one-third** are concerned about its negative impacts.

“The concerns expressed in this survey are not unfounded,” Nash said. “I am a strong supporter of implementing an affordable national health care system, but as millions of new patients are entering the current system, increased workloads and shrinking reimbursements are driving physicians out of it. The result is a care model that’s falling short.”

Survey data confirmed the bleak state of the traditional primary-care model.

- When scheduling appointments, more than **one-third** of patients have to wait four or more days to see their doctors, and nearly **one-quarter** have to wait longer than a week.
- **93 percent** of Americans spend less than 30 minutes with their doctor at appointments, and nearly **one-third** see them for less than 10 minutes.

“The traditional model puts doctors under tremendous pressure to treat huge numbers of patients at light speed,” said Dr. Jim Mumper, a PartnerMD physician and the company’s chief medical officer. “And full appointment

schedules leave those with acute care needs without many options. It's understandable that many patients and physicians are looking for a better care model."

One such model that has seen tremendous growth is concierge medicine. According to Concierge Medicine Today, 5,500 physicians across the country are practicing concierge medicine. Some estimates suggest that more than 1.5 million Americans are now subscribed to concierge services like PartnerMD, which give members ready access to doctors responsible for less than a third of the number of patients that the typical primary-care physician treats. PartnerMD's survey found that 13 percent of Americans are willing to pay an annual fee for increased access to their physician, which could represent more than 31 million more patients in the concierge model.

"While we have seen tremendous expansion, there's still a huge opportunity for growth in the membership-based model," said Nash.

Methodology

A global independent market research company, Ipsos eNation, conducted an online survey of more than 1,000 adults across the United States between Dec.19-22, 2013. Survey respondents were chosen at random in order to provide a representative sample of the population. This is the first year the survey has been conducted.

About PartnerMD

PartnerMD, a subsidiary of Markel Corporation of Richmond, is a membership medical practice specializing in primary care and executive health. Members benefit from 24/7 direct access to physicians, minimal waiting and prevention-focused care. Founded in 2003, PartnerMD has grown from 40 members to more than 6,000 and has offices in Richmond, Midlothian, McLean and Lansdowne, Va.; Greenville, S.C.; Seattle, Wash.; and Atlanta, Ga. Visit PartnerMD on the web at www.PartnerMD.com.

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