

Health IT, Transparency, P4P Key to Health Care Reform, Experts Say

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At a Senate Finance Committee hearing on Tuesday, health care experts called for health IT adoption, increased transparency and pay-for-performance programs to improve care and reduce costs, Healthcare IT News reports.

Samuel Nussbaum, executive vice president of clinical health policy and chief medical officer at WellPoint, said widespread adoption of health care IT and electronic prescribing are key to health care reform. He also called for pay-for-performance programs that evaluate health care providers on evidence-based quality measures and reward them for better health outcomes, patient safety and patient satisfaction.

Greg Schoen, regional director of Fairview Northland Medical Center in Minnesota, also supported pay-for-performance. He said, "By creating a positive incentive to improve quality, pay-for-performance is an engine for improvement and can be a framework for fundamental transformation."

Peter Lee, executive director of National Health Policy at the Pacific Business Group on Health, said the government should use Medicare payments to reward care coordination and should create a new payment review process under CMS that is physician-informed and patient-centered.

Lee added that the federal government should promote markets "both directly as a purchaser and by supporting the information every American needs to get better care."

Senate Finance Committee Chair Max Baucus (D-Mont.) said he would hold two more hearings on health care reform this year (Manos, Healthcare IT News, 9/10).