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Primary care plays a vital role in preventive care. By emphasizing preventive measures and regular check-ups, primary care providers can identify potential health issues early on, effectively preventing the need for costly acute visits and emergency department visits. Moreover, primary care providers empower patients with knowledge and guide them towards healthier lifestyle choices. This enables individuals to make informed decisions about their well-being, ultimately resulting in better health outcomes and a reduction in costly downstream healthcare interventions.

Primary care also excels in chronic disease management. Through regular monitoring, education, and personalized care plans, primary care providers help patients effectively manage their chronic conditions. In doing so, they prevent disease progression and reduce the need for expensive hospitalizations and specialized interventions.

Furthermore, primary care fosters coordinated care. By facilitating seamless communication between different specialists and healthcare providers, primary care prevents unnecessary duplication of services and reduces costs associated with fragmented care. Coordinated care also reduces physician burnout and promotes health equity-- two factors that are also associated with high costs of health care.

Many studies have shown the massive economic impacts of investing in primary care. Yanagihara and Hwang in 2022 studied over 8.5 million patients and 180 provider organizations and revealed that investing in the highest brackets of primary care would lead to \$2.4 billion in overall healthcare cost savings. Another initiative from CMMI, known as the Comprehensive Primary Care Plus (CPC+) program, indicated improvements in acute inpatient expenditures and claims-based quality measures over a six-year time period. While the full return on investment may take time, the potential for significant cost savings after dedicated primary care investment is evident.

The biggest challenges to primary care investments include the lack of strong and consistent value-based financial incentives. However, with its per member, per month prospective payment model, PC4You prioritizes value payments and can save billions of dollars in healthcare spending while improving the health and well-being of individuals and communities.

The evidence is clear – primary care is a powerful tool in our quest for affordable, high-quality healthcare.

Primary care is also a lever for reducing health inequities which translates to \$5.8 billion of cost savings annually. This economic burden includes \$1.5 billion in avoidable health care spending due to poorer health (equating to 2% of total Massachusetts annual health spending) and \$1.4 billion in lost labor productivity resulting from compromised health. Addressing health inequities and achieving health equity for communities of color could yield an estimated gain of approximately 27,000 additional full-time equivalent jobs per year. The cost of premature deaths attributed to health inequities stands at \$3.0 billion, with an estimated economic value of \$100,000 for each year of life lost to premature mortality. Notably, 49% of the economic burden is associated with inequities experienced by the Black population, followed by 44% among Hispanic/Latino communities, and 6% among Asians.

It is vital to recognize that health inequities impact all racial and ethnic groups, with an estimated economic burden of \$23.5 billion encompassing the entire population, including White residents.

The racial and ethnic composition of Massachusetts is expected to undergo significant changes over the next three decades. Unless proactive measures are taken to address health inequities, the economic burden experienced by communities of color will surge to a staggering \$11.2 billion by 2050. This projected increase underscores the urgent need for intervention and the substantial costs of inaction.

PC4You paves the way for a healthcare system that focuses on prevention, coordination, and patient-centered care. PC4You can achieve a healthier future for all, while also alleviating the financial burden on individuals and our healthcare system.

Sources:

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