

## August Newsletter



# VBIDHEALTH

Dear Task Force colleagues,

Please see below a list of noteworthy news and research from August (and early September). As always, please let me know if there are items you would like shared in the next newsletter.

### Upcoming Events

- [\*\*WEBINAR: September 13, 2:30-3:30PM - Research Community on Low Value Care Webinar: Use of Qualitative Research Methods in Addressing Low-Value Care.\*\*](#) Speakers will include Dr. Kelly Devers (NORC) and Dr. Susan Perez (California State University, Sacramento). Dr. Devers will moderate and provide an overview of the topic, highlighting the importance of qualitative research and how it can support efforts to better understand key issues in low-value care. Dr. Perez will share insights on how qualitative methods, including patient perspectives, can inform and advance efforts to improve health care value.

### News and Noteworthy Reads about Low-Value Care

- [\*\*Why Doctors Still Offer Treatments that May Not Help \(NYT Upshot\)\*\*](#)  
- "Evidence-based medicine has made progress since doctors' infamous bloodletting of George Washington, but less than you might think". This NYT article by Frakt highlights important examples of "benefits assumed, harms ignored". Frakt also co-authored a Health Affairs blog post [\*\*"Fixing Clinical Practice Guidelines"\*\*](#), which touches on the same subject of guidelines with lacking evidence.
- [\*\*Cutting low-value medical procedures an essential step \(Hamilton Specter\)\*\*](#) -- Ontario paper discusses how removing payment for procedures like knee arthroscopies is essential for sustainable public health care (Ontario, Canada).
- [\*\*Trump Administration Hits Brakes on Law to Curb Unneeded Medicare CT scans, MRIs \(KHN\)\*\*](#) -- "after physicians argued the provision would interfere

with their practices, the Trump administration delayed putting the 2014 law in place until January 2020, two years later than originally planned (for Medicare FFS patients)."

- [The Problem with MRIs for Low Back Pain \(RealClearScience\)](#) -- this article delves into one of the Task Force's Top Five, and HEDIS measure, [highlighting a recent systematic review of low back pain imaging over the last 21 years.](#)
- [Value-Based health insurer contracts growing in number, but not risk adoption \(Modern Healthcare\)](#) -- the percentage of "value-based contracts" belies how few providers actually seek to achieve shared savings, largely due to a lack of downside risk.
- [V-BID project juggles cost-sharing to better value in ACA plans \(Benefits Pro\)](#) -- an article discussing our recent release of V-BID X: "researchers propose a new method of cost-sharing for high- and low-value health care".

### Member highlight

- Lauren Vela's (PBGH) issue brief for the Commonwealth Fund: [Reducing Wasteful Spending in Employers' Pharmacy Benefit Plans](#) -- "Reducing the use of high-cost, low-value drugs could lead to \$63 million in annual savings across the 15 plan sponsors. This represented 3 percent to 24 percent of overall pharmacy spending, depending on a number of factors."

### Research on Low-Value Care

- Choosing Wisely's ["ICYMI: Noteworthy Journal Articles of 2019"](#): ABIM foundation curated the top articles of 2019, thus far, on overuse -- many but not all have been included in these newsletters.
- [Assessing Low-Value Health Care Services in the Military Health System \(Health Affairs\)](#) -- This study examined the provision of low-value care ... delivered in civilian health care facilities (purchased care) to care delivered in Department of Defense–controlled health care facilities (direct care).Magnetic resonance imaging for low back pain emerged as the most common low-value service in both care environments and could represent a target for future interventions.
- [Overuse of imaging for staging low risk prostate cancer \(Journal of Urology\)](#)
- [Analysis of appropriateness of outpatient CT and MRI referred from primary care clinics at an academic medical center: how critical is the](#)

[need for improved decision support](#) (Journal of the American College of Radiology)

- [Getting Colorectal Cancer Screening Right: A Teachable Moment](#) (JAMA)