

Healthcare quality tracking gains traction

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A survey said U.S. adults are gaining confidence in the fairness and reliability of healthcare quality assessments.

The Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll said most adults favor the use of patient satisfaction surveys to determine healthcare quality above all other quality measures. More than half of those surveyed said it is also fair to measure healthcare quality based on the use of electronic medical records.

The survey said 87 percent of people were interested in using Web-based consumer ratings tools, suggesting that an initiative to allow consumers to rate their doctors could be highly successful.

"These findings suggest that as quality measurement in health care becomes more readily available to consumers and they become more familiar with these measures that trust in the process will increase," Katherine Binns of Harris Interactive said in a statement. "At the end of the day, however, its feedback from their peers --other patients-- that matters most to consumers."

The online survey of 2,015 U.S. adults was conducted last month for the Wall Street Journal Online's Health Industry Edition.

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