

Mayo Clinic researchers study health care reform

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Results of a Mayo Clinic survey published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* shows that while physicians are open to being involved in health care reform discussions, some opposition may exist.

The results appear in the Sept. 14, 2009, edition of the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) and are the result of a national [survey](#) of nearly 1,000 U.S. physicians conducted by Mayo Clinic.

A majority of physicians who responded to the survey agree that physicians have a professional obligation to address health policy issues, are obligated to care for the uninsured or underinsured, and are willing to accept limits on reimbursement for expensive drugs and procedures for the sake of expanding access to basic health care.

However, the survey also showed that some health care reform measures such as scenarios in which patients are underinsured (such as Medicare) and using cost-effectiveness data in treatment decisions may face opposition from segments of the medical profession. Concerns were raised by some physicians especially surgical and procedural specialists who may be more likely to oppose these measures either because they believe physicians' decision-making autonomy may be limited or they may feel like they might not be adequately reimbursed for costly services they provide.

According to Jon Tilburt, M.D., M.P.H., a Mayo Clinic general internal medicine physician and survey author, "In spite of some pockets of

potential opposition, there is an opportunity to engage physicians in the national health care reform debate by building on their sense of professional responsibility. But policymakers must also engage [physicians](#) and address their concerns proactively during the process of [health care](#) reform."

More information: The entire survey can be viewed online at: healthcarereform.nejm.org/?p=1785&query=home

Source: Mayo Clinic ([news](#) : [web](#))

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