

Investing in quality of care for diabetic patients reduces costs

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University of Minnesota School of Public Health researchers have found that medical group practices can reduce costs for patients with diabetes by investing in improved quality of care.

In the study, which appears in the August issue of [Health Affairs](#), University of Minnesota researchers analyzed 234 medical group practices providing care for more than 133,000 diabetic patients. After developing a "quality of care" score based on select patient care initiatives, researchers found that medical providers saved an average of \$51 in [health care costs](#) per diabetic patient for every one-percentage-point increase in their quality of care score.

"Our research should be reassuring for physicians who are joining (or forming) value-based Accountable Care Organizations," said the study's lead author John E. Kralewski, senior research fellow at the Medical Research Institute and professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. "Our data show that they can provide [high quality care](#) while meeting the cost savings expectations of ACOs. Moreover, our study supports the contention that [health care reform](#) initiatives can reduce costs without eroding quality of care. Our data indicate that higher quality is one way to reduce costs."

According to researchers, near-term cost savings resulted, in part, from decreased inappropriate emergency department use and decreased avoidable hospital admissions, such as cholesterol screenings.

Provided by University of Minnesota

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