

Bipartisan recommendations can strengthen health system

June 28 2013



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(HealthDay)—Leaders of the Bipartisan Policy Center Health Care Cost Containment Initiative have developed a series of recommendations to strengthen the U.S. health care system, according to a sounding board piece published online June 26 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Thomas Daschle, and colleagues from the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington, D.C., have developed a comprehensive set of recommendations to improve quality, reduce waste, and control costs in an effort to strengthen the U.S. [health care system](#).

The authors provide key recommendations related to four areas of the health care system. Medicare should be improved and enhanced by promoting quality and value through Medicare Networks, an improved version of accountable care organizations. In addition, a standardized minimum benefit should be established for Medicare Advantage plans, and protection should be provided against catastrophic costs. Secondly, tax policy should be reformed to encourage efficiency and competition by replacing the "Cadillac tax" on high-cost health insurance plans and providing guidance for private-sector entities seeking to form integrated, coordinated care delivery systems. Quality, prevention, and wellness should be prioritized, with adoption of effective quality metrics encouraged and a focus toward prevention as a means for improving health and containing cost. Adoption of a streamlined and coordinated strategy to deliver services to those with dual eligibility is suggested as one way to empower and encourage states to improve care and contain costs.

"We believe that the vision and recommendations articulated in our bipartisan report, if enacted together, would help to put our national [health care](#) system, as well as our economic outlook, on a more sustainable, healthful path for the future," the authors write.

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