

# Doctors pessimistic about future of US health care

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(HealthDay)—Physicians report concerns regarding health care delivery and the future of health care, according to survey findings published by athenahealth.

Researchers from athenahealth surveyed Epocrates' physician member base to examine physicians' opinions of the current state of U.S. health care. Survey responses from March 2013 (1,200 physicians) were compared with those collected in March 2012 (507 physicians from Sermo's member base).

According to the report, many physicians perceive that [electronic medical records/electronic health records](#) improve [patient outcomes](#), but

that the benefits do not necessarily outweigh costs. As the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision, deadline approaches, confidence in a smooth transition has decreased. Physicians are still skeptical about [government involvement](#) lowering costs or improving outcomes, but there is less passion surrounding the issue. Increases have been noted in meaningful use familiarity, engagement, confidence, and achievement. Familiarity with Accountable Care Organizations is increasing and negative sentiments toward them are decreasing; however, 64 percent of independent physicians feel they are more likely to have a negative impact on profitability. Seventy-eight percent of physicians are pessimistic about the future feasibility of independent practices and many still feel the quality of medicine will decrease in the next five years (65 percent of independent physicians and 55 percent of employed physicians).

"Doctors are besieged by change and requirements and it's incredibly difficult for them to keep up," Todd Rothenhaus, M.D., chief medical officer of athenahealth, said in a statement. "As an industry and country, we need to pay attention to the fact that doctors are overwhelmed and challenged in areas they shouldn't be."

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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