

Challenges ID'd in development of the physician compare website

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Photo: U.S. National Institutes of Health

(HealthDay)—Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), information must be made available to allow the public to compare physicians, although there are considerable challenges surrounding the development of the physician performance website, Physician Compare. These challenges are addressed in a health policy brief published online Dec. 11 in *Health Affairs*.

Amid changes to improve sites comparing hospitals, nursing homes, home health, and dialysis facilities, Physician Compare is being developed as part of the ACA and subsequent legislation. The main driver behind this site is the demand from payers for more

accountability amid continued quality gaps and rising [health care costs](#).

According to the *Health Affairs* report, there are currently about 50 efforts underway to assess and report on [physician performance](#). Some are national, while others are state or regionally based; many ratings are based on low numbers of reviewers and have not been widely marketed. In contrast, commercial online ratings are growing in popularity. Challenges to Physician Compare include specific performance measures which are relevant to one medical specialty area, lack of standardization, and methods to adjust for illness severity and patient demographics. Additional challenges include packaging and presenting the information, implementing outcome measures, competing with consumer review sites, measuring individual doctors versus groups, and gaining the public's trust.

"Physician Compare is a work in progress," according to the report. "It has the potential to be an important source of information and empowerment for consumers and a significant driver of choice, competition, and health care improvement."

More information: [Full Text](#)

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