

# AMA: Physicians driving the slowing of health care costs

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(HealthDay)—Low physician spending is contributing to an overall slowing of health care costs, according to a viewpoint piece published by the American Medical Association (AMA).

Noting that in 2013 there was growth in spending of only 3.6 percent over the previous year, Barbara L. McAneny, M.D., chair of the AMA Board of Trustees discusses the slowing growth in [health care spending](#), and specifically refers to various changes that have been implemented in her practice.

The author notes that over the 2003 to 2013 period, physician spending grew more slowly than [hospital spending](#), clinical spending, and total personal health spending. Hospital spending represents the largest

proportion of spending, about 32 percent, and avoiding hospitalization can keep costs down. Innovations such as offering same day appointments and encouraging patients to call the clinic before going to the emergency room have reduced costs. Addressing the burdens of chronic disease is another way to minimize costs. Lowering administrative burdens and increasing practice efficiency can also lower costs.

"A new analysis from the AMA helps shed some light on how the [health care](#) dollar is spent, and reveals that costs aren't as out of control as we may think," McAneny writes.

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

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