Plan suggested for reducing health care costs

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(HealthDay)—Health care costs can be reduced, with a nine-step plan suggested as a starting place, according to an article published in *Medical Economics*.

Noting that in 2016 the United States spent more than $3 trillion on health care, the report suggests that money spent on health care is not being spent wisely, with wastage, redundancy, inefficiency, bureaucracy, and possibly over-charging in some sectors.

A nine-point plan to reduce health care costs by 28 percent has been developed. These points include streamlining the current manner in which providers bill insurance companies, Medicare, Medicaid, or patients, which could save at least 20 percent of the health care dollar. In addition, high facility fees charged by hospitals have exacerbated the increasing cost of health care. Other suggestions to cut costs include reducing unnecessary non-cosmetic elective surgeries; reducing the cost of new drugs; expanding Medicare for younger and healthier people; exploring a mechanism for all licensed providers to donate a percentage of their time and resources to work on Medicare; deploying telemedicine; deploying more nurse practitioners and physician assistants; and using health information technology to cut costs and increase efficiency.

"It took us decades to get here, but if we all chip in, we can reduce health care costs by at least 28 percent of over $3 trillion without significantly compromising, and instead, increasing the quality of health care," according to the article.

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