

Deceleration in health care spending growth in 2016

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(HealthDay)—Health care spending growth slowed in 2016 following

faster growth in 2014 and 2015, according to research published online Dec. 6 in *Health Affairs*.

Micah Hartman, from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in Baltimore, and colleagues examined [national health care](#) spending in 2016.

The researchers noted a 4.3 percent increase in total nominal U.S. health care spending in 2016, reaching \$3.3 trillion; per capita spending increased by \$354, reaching \$10,348. In 2016, the share of gross domestic product devoted to health care spending was 17.9 percent, up from 17.7 percent in 2015. In 2016 there was a deceleration in health spending growth, following faster growth in 2014 and 2015, in association with Affordable Care Act (ACA) coverage expansions and strong retail prescription drug spending growth. The slowdown noted in 2016 was broadly based, with decelerations in spending for the largest categories by payer and by service. The slowdown in Medicaid and private health insurance spending growth in 2016 was driven by enrollment trends, while Medicare spending was influenced by slower per enrollee spending growth.

"In 2016, as expected, [health care spending](#) growth slowed following the major expansion of health insurance coverage in 2014 and 2015, when the ACA expanded eligibility for the Medicaid program and provided access to [private health insurance](#) Marketplaces," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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