

U.S. spends more on health care, but has worse life expectancy

January 30 2020



(HealthDay)—The United States spends substantially more than any

other wealthy nation on health care, yet it has a lower life expectancy and a higher suicide rate than other wealthy nations, according to a January data brief released by the Commonwealth Fund.

The Commonwealth Fund researchers used data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 2019 health statistics release, which tracks health system measures from 36 [high-income countries](#). Eleven countries—Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States—were included in the analysis.

The researchers found that in 2018, the United States spent 16.9 percent of its gross domestic product on [health care](#), almost double what the average OECD country spent. Despite this spending, in 2017, Americans had a life expectancy of 78.6 years, more than two years lower than the average for other wealthy nations. Suicides account for 13.9 deaths per 100,000 people in the United States, double the suicide rate of the United Kingdom. The U.S. rates for hospitalizations related to diabetes and hypertension are approximately 50 percent higher than the OECD average. Since 2000, preventable deaths overall have been falling in each of the 11 nations, but the United States continues to have the highest rates of premature deaths from diabetes, hypertensive diseases, and certain cancers.

"This study demonstrates yet again that while the United States substantially outspends every other wealthy nation on health care, we don't get our money's worth," David Blumenthal, M.D., president of the Commonwealth Fund, said in a statement. "Americans are living shorter, unhealthier lives because our health system is not working as well as it could be."

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Citation: U.S. spends more on health care, but has worse life expectancy (2020, January 30)
retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-01-health-worse-life.html>

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