



Health Care Reform and Specialty-Specific Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs)

At US Oncology we have embraced the health information technology (IT) revolution from its early stages. We have harnessed its advantages not only to provide the best quality care for our cancer patients, but also to provide a foundation and a new direction for health care reform that we believe has the ability to benefit all of medicine in the future.

We at US Oncology believe that the use of specialty-specific accountable care organizations (ACOs) has vast potential for improving coordination, transparency and quality in care delivery. For this reason, we strongly supported the inclusion of specialty-specific ACOs in the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

US Oncology has seen first-hand that ACOs can maintain and improve quality while reducing the total cost of a patient's cancer care. US Oncology has already begun to offer and implement a program that brings together physicians, patients, health plans and employers to address the top oncology cost drivers with a collaborative and integrated model of care.

We are proud of a recent study¹ which shows that this program can produce significant savings (35 percent) while maintaining the highest quality care for patients with non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).

The keys to success with this US Oncology approach are the following:

- Oncologist-developed Level I Pathways, which are **evidence-based guidelines of cancer care directed through our health IT platform known as iKnowMed**, re-direct the wide range of treatments currently driving tremendous disparities in oncology care into more precise, clinically proven treatment options;
- The program's patient support services enable oncologists to **proactively manage a cancer patient's disease** between office visits with regular outreach to the patient and focused education specific to his or her condition, which helps to reduce medical errors and avoid recurrent hospital visits; and
- **Advance Care Planning** facilitates open and frank conversations between the oncology care team and the patient and his or her family regarding disease progression and documentation of patient treatment preferences, including palliative care and hospice.

These important elements can and should be utilized to reduce costs and medical errors while empowering oncologists to greatly enhance cancer research and standards of care.

Find out more at www.usoncology.com.