

A Remedy to Our Health Care Woes

By Spencer R. Berthelsen, M.D.

Coordinated Care at a Glance

- Coordinated care takes a team approach among physicians, with a reliance on health information technology like the electronic medical record.
- A lack of coordinated care can lead to costly inefficiencies such as unnecessary tests or medical errors.
- KelseyCare patients receive the benefits of 60 years of proven excellence – the Kelsey-Seybold coordinated care model.

The Obama administration and Congress are promising to reform our nation's health care system. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus, D-Mont., is correct when he cautions that "the health system is so complex that any solution will demand time and attention to make sure that we get it right." But how exactly do we go about getting it right in making needed corrections to our health care system?

To make progress toward improving quality and containing costs, serious consideration should be given to organized systems of care. An amount of \$1.1 billion has been set aside in the \$787 billion stimulus bill to evaluate methods of treatment used to treat common illnesses, with a goal of identifying effective treatment pathways based on the standard of evidence-based medicine. But this research effort will fall short unless it considers organized systems of care. While it's not widely recognized, these systems produce better clinical outcomes at a lower overall cost of care. They deserve a closer look.

Organized systems of care include some of the most trusted names in health care, such as Mayo Clinic, Kaiser Permanente, Geisinger Health System, Scott & White, and Kelsey-Seybold Clinic. They are based on care coordination and use evidence-based care practices with an increasing reliance on the effective use of information technology.



"Today, organized systems of care are providing millions of Americans with high-quality care at a lower overall medical cost. They deserve to be emulated and reinforced."

Spencer R. Berthelsen, M.D.
Chairman, Board of Managers
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic

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Recent studies strongly suggest that these organized systems of care are needed in America:

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in August reported the results of its Physician Group Practice Demonstration project – concluding that 10 participating multispecialty physician groups saved Medicare \$17.4 million while improving health care outcomes.
- The Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice studied end-of-life health care

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Kelsey-Seybold Clinic: Four Decades of Caring for Corporate Clients

When it comes to corporate health, Kelsey-Seybold combines its state-of-the-science technology with the quality, convenience and medical expertise needed to help keep your executives healthy and productive.

We respect your busy schedule. So, instead of making multiple appointments, our Executive Health Assessment consolidates your exams and consultations into one streamlined visit with same-day results available on most medical testing. And our Health and Wellness programs can help identify and address personal health issues for all your employees.

Since 1966, when NASA awarded us a contract to provide medical support services for contractor and civil service employees at the Johnson Space Center, Kelsey-Seybold has been in the business of providing high quality corporate medical services.

One of the healthiest investments your company can make is an investment in the health of your executives.



Our Concierge service for your executives offers personalized assistance for scheduling appointments and tests. For more information, call 713-442-EXEC (3932).

Same-day Results on Most Tests

The Kelsey-Seybold Clinic Executive Health Assessment consolidates into one streamlined visit all the medical testing, medical expertise and consultations that ordinarily take several office visits. The program includes:

- Privacy, convenience and quality care in a single visit to our Main Campus.
- Comprehensive health and wellness assessments performed by board-certified physicians.
- Elegant and private environment in our Mavis & Mary Kelsey Specialty Suite.
- Same-day results on most tests with follow-up physician consultations and referrals to on-campus medical specialists, as needed.

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resource utilization, comparing UCLA and Mayo Clinic.

UCLA spent more than \$93,000 per patient over the last two years of life. Mayo Clinic, by contrast, spent \$53,432, a little more than half the amount of UCLA, on similar patients over the same period of time. Chronically ill patients had more than twice as many physician visits at UCLA compared with Mayo, and they spent almost 50 percent more days in the hospital.

- In a *New York Times* report, Hewitt Associates concluded that integrated systems such as Kaiser Permanente “provided 22 percent greater cost efficiency than competing systems.” A similar Hewitt benchmarking study of health plans in Houston described Kelsey-Seybold’s “KelseyCare” health benefits plan as the area’s most financially efficient plan. The plan demonstrates comparatively higher-quality measures along with lower overall cost, according to Hewitt.

Fixing the nation’s health care system is a daunting task with many complexities to consider. I believe that those involved in the process should take a careful look at what’s already working well. Experimentation will be costly and, in the health care field, potentially dangerous. Today, organized systems of care are providing millions of Americans with high-quality care at a lower overall medical cost. They deserve to be emulated and reinforced.

About the author:

Dr. Spencer R. Bertelsen joined Kelsey-Seybold Clinic in 1980, after completing his residency in Internal Medicine at the University of California at San Diego. He is currently is Chairman of the Board of Managers at Kelsey-Seybold.

Portions of this article were first published in the Houston Chronicle’s Outlook section on April 20, 2009.

METRO RETIREES RECEIVE ACCESS TO PREMIER CARE WITH KELSEY-CARE ADVANTAGE

Plan Offers Savings to Company and Comprehensive Coverage with Fewer Out-of-Pocket Costs to Retirees

Finding affordable group retiree health insurance that provides extensive coverage and reliable service can be challenging. That's why more and more companies are turning to KelseyCare Advantage for their group retiree medical plans. One of these companies is the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), who selected KelseyCare Advantage to design a flexible health plan that met the needs of their company, as well as the needs of their retirees.

"Working with KelseyCare Advantage has been a 'win-win' situation for everyone involved," said Ray Fischer, director of benefits, compensation and wellness for METRO. "They crafted a very excellent plan that provides our employees exceptional service they're familiar with, at a price that's less than what they had been paying. And, it's allowed us to contain our costs and provide savings to the company."

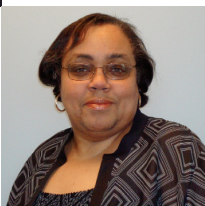
The cornerstone of KelseyCare Advantage is its renowned provider network, Kelsey-Seybold Clinic, one of Houston's most trusted names in health care. Kelsey-Seybold Clinic has been providing comprehensive medical care to the Houston community for 60 years.

"The credibility of Kelsey couldn't be questioned because they relate to the issues and challenges of what's going on in Houston, which is where our retiree base is located. Having local folks addressing our needs played a big part in the decision," said Fischer.

Debbie Ware, manager of benefits and pensions for METRO agrees. "You just feel that you are getting very good, honest attention and care."



Raymond Fischer
Director of Benefits, Compensation
and Wellness
METRO



Debbie Ware
Manager, Benefits and Pension
METRO

To help educate retirees, KelseyCare Advantage also offers seminars and one-on-one consultations for their retirees free-of-charge.

"KelseyCare Advantage reached out any way we needed them to in order to help our retirees. Some met with the KelseyCare Advantage team in a group setting and some met with them individually," said Ware.

KelseyCare Advantage provides complete coverage by combining Medicare Parts A and B so that retirees are covered for their hospital stays and doctor visits under one simple plan. KelseyCare Advantage also offers plans with prescription drug benefits, and most plans have no or very low deductibles and copayments for services, which results in fewer out-of-pocket costs for retirees.

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Companies benefit as well. KelseyCare Advantage allows companies to alleviate financial risk by moving retiree health care costs into a fully insured health plan for a very low premium, while reducing FAS 106 and GAS 45 liability.

For more information about KelseyCare Advantage and its group retiree medical plans, contact Carmen Timm at **713-816-2737** or Erica Harris at **713-703-7584**.

Kelsey-Seybold Physician Appointed to Medical Legislation Board

Patrick M. Carter, M.D., M.B.A., F.A.A.F.P., Medical Director for Care Coordination and Quality Improvement at Kelsey-Seybold Clinic, has been appointed to serve on the Board of Medical Legislation for the Harris County Medical Society (HCMS).



Patrick M. Carter, M.D.
Medical Director for
Care Coordination and
Quality Improvement
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic

Dr. Carter has been practicing with Kelsey-Seybold Clinic since 1994, and is Chief of the Department of Family Medicine. He was named the 2009 Harris County Family Physician of the Year by the Harris County Academy of Family Physicians.

The Board keeps abreast of all legislative matters and proposals affecting the medical profession and works closely with the Texas Medical Association Council on legislation to ensure that the HCMS membership is informed in all legislative matters.

Among his many duties at Kelsey-Seybold Clinic, Dr. Carter writes on the topic of health care reform for his blog, "A Doctor's Perspective on Health Care Reform." For more information, please visit <http://drpatrickcarter.blogspot.com/>.

MyKelseyOnline Helps You Get a Handle on Your Health



With MyKelseyOnline, patients can log on securely to:

- Send secure electronic messages to their primary care and specialty care physician's office staff
- Directly schedule appointments with primary care physicians
- Request appointments with Kelsey-Seybold specialists
- View past and upcoming appointments
- Cancel appointments
- Update personal, demographic and insurance information

While MyKelseyOnline facilitates convenient communication between patients and physicians, it should not be used for urgent health care issues. In such cases, patients should call their physician's office or 911.

When Dr. Mavis Kelsey started his practice in Houston in 1949, there were no office computers, PCs, faxes or cellular phones. But he stayed close to his patients, sometimes calling on his clients twice a day at their homes when they were ill.

As we mark the 60th anniversary of Kelsey-Seybold Clinic, we are pleased to unveil a new service that's equally dedicated to keeping us close to our patients – MyKelseyOnline. We believe that this 21st century system is so vital to the way you live that we've invested \$25 million into a state-of-the-science electronic medical record system to keep you connected with **Your Doctors for Life.**

With MyKelseyOnline, you'll enjoy greater convenience in a mobile world and the ability to keep in touch with your doctor. It is secure, easy to use and trustworthy. And it's available at no fee to you.

