

Universal Health Care Work Group Q&A

About the video for the Work Group meeting on August 25, 2020

We created this Q&A to answer questions from two videos that were created for Universal Health Care Work Group members: [Preparing for the August 25th Meeting](#). The Q&A is organized by topic and updated as we receive new questions.

Cost Sharing

1. I question your statements on pages 10 and 11 of the August meeting materials slide deck regarding the idea that cost sharing can reduce inappropriate care and can drive consumers to scrutinize costs and explore options. I would like to know your sources for these statements.

Thank you for sharing your perspective with our team. We will include it in its entirety in the next round of public comments that is shared with the Work Group.

Within your feedback, you asked for the sources of the statements that cost sharing can reduce both appropriate and inappropriate utilization. These statements were drawn from a number of sources, including a study discussed in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that ER copays did influence utilization for less emergent care.¹ Other studies have found that copays reduce the likelihood of individuals seeking care for minor symptoms, and for some populations, more serious symptoms.² Importantly for the Work Group, other studies show that cost-sharing design matters.³

¹ Selby, J. V., Fireman, B. H., & Swain, B. E. (1996). Effect of a Copayment on Use of the Emergency Department in a Health Maintenance Organization. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 334(10), 635-642. doi:10.1056/nejm199603073341006

² Wong MD, Andersen R, Sherbourne CD, Hays RD, Shapiro MF. Effects of cost sharing on care seeking and health status: results from the Medical Outcomes Study. *Am J Public Health*. 2001;91(11):1889-1894. doi:10.2105/ajph.91.11.1889

³ Salampessy, B.H., Alblas, M.M., Portrait, F.R.M. *et al.* The effect of cost-sharing design characteristics on use of health care recommended by the treating physician; a discrete choice experiment. *BMC Health Serv Res* 18, 797 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-018-3598-4>