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HEALTH CARE FACT SHEET

- When they receive health care, Americans receive appropriate care 55% of the time. The results of this major study led the authors to conclude that, "The deficits we have identified in adherence to recommended processes for basic care pose serious threats to the health of the American public." (*New England Journal of Medicine, June 26, 2003*)
- Unexplained variations in health care result in 44,000 to 98,000 preventable deaths. Preventable health care-related injuries cost the economy from \$17 to \$29 billion annually, of which half are health care costs. (*Institute of Medicine*)
- Even when using low estimates, deaths due to medical errors would be the 8th leading cause of death in the U.S. More people die in a given year as a result of medical errors than from motor vehicle accidents (43,458), breast cancer (42,297), or AIDS (16,516). ("*To Err Is Human: Building a Safer Health System.*" *Institute of Medicine, 2000*)
- A limited number of conditions, about 15 to 25, account for the majority of health care services (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999; Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, 2000; Ray et al., 2000). Nearly all of these conditions are chronic. By focusing attention on a limited number of common conditions, it will be possible to make sizable improvements in the quality of care received by many individuals within the coming decade. (*Institute of Medicine*)
- Approximately 70 percent of health care costs come from illnesses that are preventable. ("*Reducing Health Care Costs by Reducing the Need and Demand for Medical Services.*" *The New England Journal of Medicine, July 29, 1993*)
- Over half (55 percent) of the public in 2004 said that they were currently dissatisfied with the quality of health care in this country, compared to 44 percent in 2000. (*The Kaiser Family Foundation/Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality/Harvard School of Public Health*)

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