USC Schaeffer Center Update: March 2015

Leonard D. Schaeffer Chair Installation and Celebration
Dana Goldman formally named as the Leonard D. Schaeffer Chair

The USC Sol Price School of Public Policy and the USC School of Pharmacy formally recognized and celebrated Dana Goldman as the Leonard D. Schaeffer Chair and Director of the Schaeffer Center last month. The chair installation took place on February 11, 2015 at the Beverly Hills Hilton. View photos of the celebration here.

Mortality Versus Survival
Moving Forward Our Understanding of the Value of Cancer Care

In one of the top-10 most-read Health Affairs articles of 2012, Dana Goldman, Darius Lakdawalla and others found that life expectancy after cancer diagnosis rose more quickly for patients in the U.S. than for patients in Europe. And furthermore, that Americans receive good value from their health care system, even after considering higher US costs. Since its publication, much attention has been placed on this work, including in the 2013 Economic Report of the President (charts on page 166).

Nearly three years later, their work is still leading the conversation on the value of cancer care. The authors return with further thoughts to help others better answer this
crucial, nuanced question: does the health care system perform better for U.S. cancer patients than for those of other countries? Read the blog post at Health Affairs.

Fixing America's Mental Healthcare System
Seabury discussed his research at a conference in collaboration with The Hill

Seth Seabury discussed research on the consequences of limiting reimbursements for Major Depressive Disorder antidepressant treatments at Fixing America's Mental Healthcare System. The event featured Senator Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) and Representative Tim Murphy (R-Pa.), along with other industry and policy leaders in a discussion on the economic and societal toll of cost-cutting policies that limit access to treatment for mentally ill patients.

Medicaid Access Restrictions on Psychiatric Drugs
Medicaid formulary restrictions save little if any money on drug spending

Three recent studies by Schaeffer Center researchers examine Medicaid formulary restrictions for psychiatric medications and its long-term effects on Medicaid spending, hospitalizations and incarceration rates for people with serious mental illnesses. The findings are summarized in our newest issue brief.

Did Medicare Part D Reduce Disparities?
Evidence that breaks in coverage causes disruptions for vulnerable populations

In a study released in the American Journal of Managed Care, Schaeffer Center researchers Julie Zissimopoulos, Geoffrey Joyce, Lauren Scarpati, and Dana Goldman examined the impact of the Medicare Part D coverage gap on medication use by Hispanics, blacks, and whites with diabetes. They found the coverage gap disproportionately affected medication use of minorities and those of low socioeconomic status.

Benefits of Robotic-Assisted Surgery Far Outweigh Costs
Measuring cost and access for treatments should include long-term benefits

The benefits of robotically-assisted surgery for patients with kidney cancer outweigh the healthcare and surgical costs by a ratio of five to one, according to a study co-authored by Dana Goldman and published in Health Affairs last month. The authors found that the real issue was access to the robotic technology, which they speculate was in part due to the upfront cost of purchasing it.
The US Hospital System May Be Outperforming Expectations
Study shows hospital productivity has increased from 2002-2011

John Romley, Dana Goldman, and Neeraj Sood authored a study published in Health Affairs that concluded that hospitals may have increased productivity in the last decade. Considering the implications of the Affordable Care Act which links Medicare reimbursement rates to economywide productivity, the results of this study show that concern over hospitals' ability to keep up may be unwarranted.

Schaeffer Center Data Corner

The Schaeffer Center has new neighbors and data collaborators! Dr. Jinkook Lee's research group from the USC Davis School of Gerontology has recently moved to the Center for Economic & Social Research (CESR), also located in the VPD building. Dr. Lee's group, The Program on Global Aging, Health, & Policy, is harmonizing data across the international versions of the Health and Retirement Survey (HRS), including the US (HRS), Mexico (MHAS), England (ELSA), Korea (KLoSA), Indonesia (IFLS), Japan (JSTAR), Ireland (TILDA), China (CHARLS), India (LASI), and a number of European countries (SHARE). For more information click here.

New Schaeffer Publications

Julie Zissimopoulos, Geoffrey F. Joyce, Lauren M. Scarpati, and Dana Goldman in AJMC: "Did Medicare Part D Reduce Disparities?"

John Romley, Dana Goldman, and Neeraj Sood in Health Affairs: "US Hospitals Experienced Substantial Productivity Growth During 2002-2011"

Dan P. Ly, Seth A. Seabury, and Anupam B. Jena in the BMJ: "Divorce Among Physicians and Other Healthcare Professional in the US"

Dana Goldman, Amitabh Chandra, et. al in Health Affairs: "Robot-Assisted Surgery For Kidney Cancer Increased Access to a Procedure that Can Reduce Mortality and Renal Failure"

Christin A. Thompson and Joel W. Hay in Annal of Epidemiology: "Estimating the Association Between Metabolic Risk Factors and Marijuana Use in US Adults"
Schaeffer Experts in the News

Dana Goldman and Drew Altman co-authored an post for The Wall Street Journal's Think Tank, "Medicare Spending Cuts and Hospital Productivity Gains."

John Romley in Modern Healthcare, "Hospitals May Have Improved Productivity After All."

Paul Ginsburg in an article by the Healthcare Financial Management Association, "Moving Forward with Accountable Care."

Paul Ginsburg in Crain's Chicago Business, "Empty Beds Plague State's Hospitals."


Geoffrey Joyce in The Conversation: "Why Are Some Generic Drugs Getting So Expensive?"

About the Schaeffer Center
The mission of the Leonard D. Schaeffer Center for Health Policy & Economics at the University of Southern California is to measurably improve value in health through evidence based policy solutions, research excellence, transformative education, and private and public sector engagement. The Center is a unique collaboration between the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy and the USC School of Pharmacy.

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