

State Leadership Highlights

States are leading the way when it comes to prioritizing advanced primary care. In recent years, several states have pursued legislation or regulation to measure, benchmark, and ultimately increase, levels of investment in primary care. Below is an overview of state actions to-date.

Leading the Way

CONNECTICUT

- In January 2020, CT Governor Ned Lamont passed an [executive order](#) setting a target for state expenditures on primary care to be at least 10% by 2025.
- The bill calls to establish a Technical Advisory Board of state government leaders and healthcare stakeholders to guide the state's progress and set cost growth benchmarks in tandem with established quality benchmarks.

DELAWARE

- In August 2019, the state assembly passed an act that expanded membership of the primary care reform collaborative and created an office of value-based health care delivery in the department of insurance to reduce health care costs and establish targets for investment to support a "robust system of primary care" by Jan 2025.
- In 2018, DE passed its first piece of legislation related to primary care investment by requiring insurers to participate in the state's health care claims database and establishing a primary care reform collaborative to include health care stakeholders, and members of the state senate, house, and broader community. The Collaborative issued recommendations in January 2019 that included a target of 12% investment in primary care with increases directed to non-fee-for-service spending.

MAINE

- In June 2019, ME passed legislation "An Act to Establish Transparency in Primary Health Care Spending" ([LD 1353](#)) requiring insurers to report primary care expenditures to the Maine Health Data Organization. It also calls for the Maine Quality Forum to use this data to report the percentage of total medical expenditures spent on primary care to the Department of Health and Human Services and the Legislature on an annual basis.

WASHINGTON

- In 2019, WA appropriated \$110,000 for fiscal year 2020 to determine annual primary care expenditures by the state's insurance carriers. The action was mandated through a budget proviso through the Office of Financial Management, which oversees the state's APCD. The state's first report was issued in December 2019.
- In the 2020 session, the state is now considering legislation ([HB 2615](#)) to establish a multi-stakeholder primary care collaborative that would report findings and recommendations to the governor and legislature regarding state spending on primary care.

COLORADO

- In May 2019, CO passed legislation [HB19-1233](#) (Investments In Primary Care To Reduce Health Costs) that set targets for investment in primary care and established a primary care payment reform collaborative in the division of insurance. Proposed legislation in 2018 helped lay the foundation for this step, when primary care stakeholders came together in support of [HB18-1365](#) (Primary Care Infrastructure Creation), which would have created a collaborative and primary care spend reporting.

VERMONT

- In May 2019, VT passed legislation increasing the proportion of healthcare spending allocated to primary care. The legislation, [S.53](#), requires the Green Mountain Care Board to: determine the proportion of healthcare spending currently allocated to primary care; recommend the proportion that should be allocated to primary care going forward; and project the avoided costs that would likely result if that proportion were achieved.
- In 2015, the Primary Care Payment Work Group identified how a capitation payment model for primary care might be implemented in Vermont. The work included significant analysis of primary care spending and recommendations to increase the share of total healthcare expenditures that flow to primary care providers.

WEST VIRGINIA

- In March 2019, WV passed [SB 641](#) creating the Primary Care Support Program to provide technical and organizational assistance to community-based primary care services and to report on the state's level of Medicaid investment in primary care as a percentage of total Medicaid expenditures.

OREGON

- In 2017, the OR legislature unanimously passed legislation setting a minimum primary care spend threshold for all payers – both commercial and public – of at least 12% of total medical expenditures by 2023. A 2016 study showed that for every additional dollar spent on primary care, savings of \$13 were found in other services.¹
- In 2015, OR passed legislation to measure and annually report levels of primary care spend and created a public-private collaborative to develop recommendations for the state's Health Policy Board.
- In 2009, the state legislature established the Patient-Centered Primary Care Home (PCPCH) program and a task force of clinicians, consumers, public health and healthcare delivery experts.

RHODE ISLAND

- In 2010, RI's health insurance commissioner implemented affordability standards for all commercial insurers in the state, including a requirement that insurers raise their primary care spending rate by 1 percentage point per year (using strategies other than increasing fee-for-service payments) as a condition for rate approval. Insurers responded by spending more on PCMHs, ACOs, performance incentives, and "common good" services such as health information technology, practice transformation, and loan-repayment programs.²
- The state increased its primary care spending from 5.7% in 2008 to 9.1% in 2012. Over this same period, total healthcare expenditures fell by 14%.³
- In 2014, and evaluation of RI saw a 7.2% reduction in hospital admissions.²

Legislation Pending

HAWAII

- In January 2019, HI introduced [HB 1444](#) to establish a task force known as the primary care payment reform collaborative to: examine current investment levels in primary care; and develop annual recommendations to the legislature to strengthen the state's primary care system.
- That bill has since been carried over to the 2020 session for consideration.

MASSACHUSETTS

- In October 2019, MA Governor Charlie Baker proposed legislation that would increase primary care and behavioral health investment by 30% over three years. The bill [H 4134](#) (An Act to Improve Health Care by Investing in Value) broadly identifies five themes to move the state's health care system towards value.

Past Attempts

MISSOURI

- In February 2019, MO's House of Representatives introduced [HB 879](#), the Primary Care Transparency Act, which would have established a primary care payment reform collaborative for the state. The bill was referred to the Committee on Health and Mental Health Policy and a public hearing was hosted the next month. While the bill did not move forward, interest is building in the state.

CALIFORNIA

- A bill sponsored by the CA Academy of Family Physicians was introduced in 2018: the Primary Care Spending Transparency Act ([AB-2895](#)). The bill did not pass, due in part to health plan opposition.

[Read the latest state annual reports here.](#)

Is Your State Listed?

If not, let's make it happen! Email us at policy@thepcc.org to get involved in our primary care investment workgroup and other offerings

¹ Koller, C. (n.d.). Primary Care Spending Rate - A Lever for Encouraging Investment in Primary Care | NEJM. Retrieved from <https://www.nejm.org/doi/10.1056/NEJMp1709538>

² Rhode Island Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner. "Commercial Insurer Primary Care Spending." January 21, 2014. <http://www.ohic.ri.gov/ohic-hiac-reports.php>

³ Gelmon, S., et al (2016) Implementation of Oregon's PCPCH Program, <http://www.oregon.gov/oha/HPA/CSI-PCPCH/Documents/PCPCH-Program-Implementation-Report-Sept2016.pdf>