Affordable Care Act and Its   
Achievements   
Topic: Affordable Care Act Words: 600 Pages: 3   
The Affordable Care Act and Medicare   
The most important change introduced by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is the change in the   
new payment system. The fee -for-service model common before the establishment of the   
ACA has several flaws, including the possibility of needless treatment, also ter med   
overutilization. The ACA substitutes it with the accountability -based model, where the   
healthcare providers are responsible for the quality of care as well as for the total cost.   
Another change introduced by the ACA is the possibility to choose the ben efits of Medicare   
through private plans. Such conditions will likely decrease the costs of Medicare, as the   
providers would seek competitive advantage by adjusting the prices to the existing ones.   
Finally, the ACA encourages the providers to test the new p ayment methods, which opens up   
additional opportunities for cost reduction, and the extended Medicare Trust Fund protection   
policies will close the gaps in funding, thus preventing the Medicare costs from growing.   
Aside from that, the ACA is expected to im prove the quality of healthcare services in general.   
First, the competition with the private plans described above will create the need to improve   
the quality of services to improve the reputation. Second, the overall increase in demand for   
the services, t riggered by the improved accessibility, is expected to boost the quality of   
offered services. Another possible outcome is the decrease in the cost of hiring a new   
employee, which will streamline the HR policies in the field and stimulate job growth   
(Whaley et al., 2014). Besides, the distancing from the fee -for-service model will contribute   
to the promotion of integrated care, as the clinicians will no longer be interested in provided   
separate treatments. The additional care coordination introduced by the A CA is expected to provide individual clinicians with more resources to provide better treatment, although this   
option is obviously dependent on the initiative of the provider.   
Article Analysis   
The article deals with a fairly widespread phenomenon of the cl osure of rural hospitals. The   
study observes three cases of closure in 2015. Of the three closures, only one occurred in the   
Medicaid expansion state – the Parkway Regional Hospital in Fulton, Kentucky (Wishner,   
Solleveld, Rudowitz, Paradise, & Antonisse, 2016).   
The case study allows us to isolate several external factors. The most prominent and common   
is poverty: the welfare of the rural population is traditionally insufficient for healthcare   
services. Medicare and Medicaid costs are also relatively high. Thus the majority of the   
population is uninsured. The economic setup is equally unwelcoming, with the high   
unemployment rate resulting from the decline of local industries. The young tend to leave the   
area, further aggravating the demographics. As a result , the population of the region is   
gradually dwindling. Finally, many residents seek health care services in other areas, further   
depriving the hospital of resources.   
The first strategy the hospital could have benefited from would be the improved accessibil ity   
provided by the ACA. Medicaid notably leaves the poorest social strata out of its scope, and   
the Kentucky hospital was suffering from the high poverty rates. Admittedly, such change   
needs to be rapid enough to provide timely intervention and raise the number of patients   
seeking treatment. Another strategy would be improved communication with the population.   
Admittedly, the social media platforms would be of limited use in the area where the elderly   
population is prevalent, so instead, a simple, dedicate d mobile app could be introduced to   
provide the necessary information on the hospital’s services. This would overturn   
unsubstantiated rumors regarding the incompetence of the local personnel and create better demand, which, combined with the more affordabl e costs, would gradually improve the   
position of the hospital.   
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