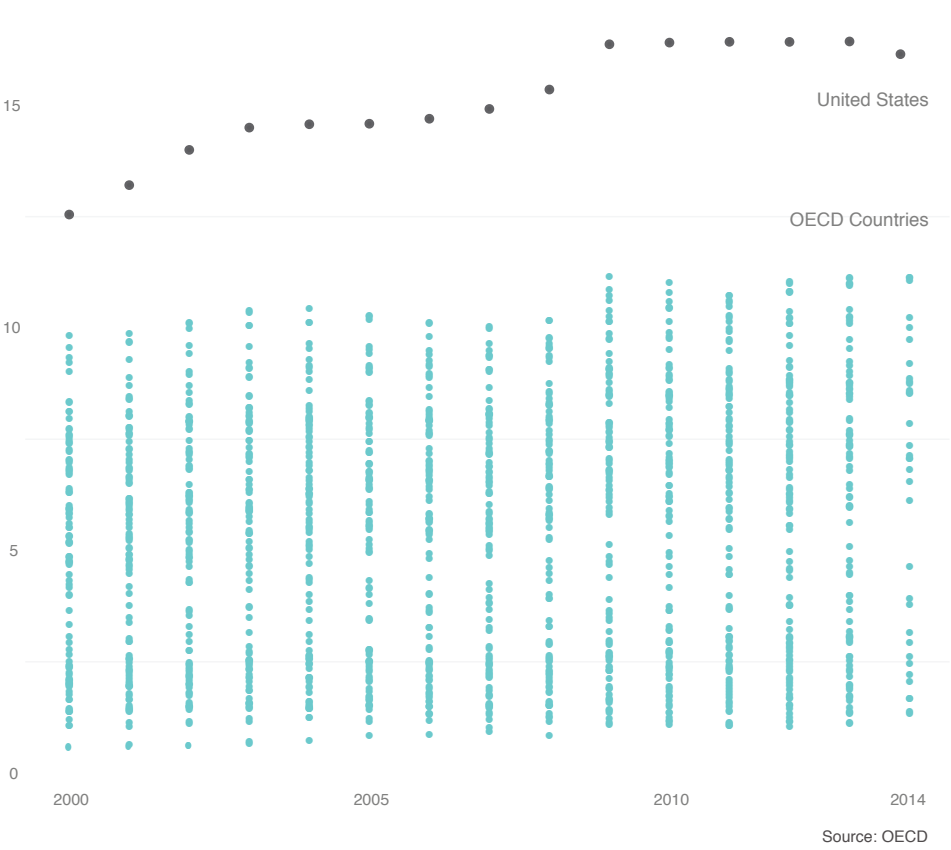


U.S. Outlier in health spending

Colonoscopy demonstrate discrepancies in prices, even within the country.

America spent on heathcare 9% of GDP in 1980, and despite constant GDP growth now the health bill represents almost 17% of the economic output. This is way more then any other country, putting the US on spotlight debates on why american health is so expensive.

Health Spending in % of GDP

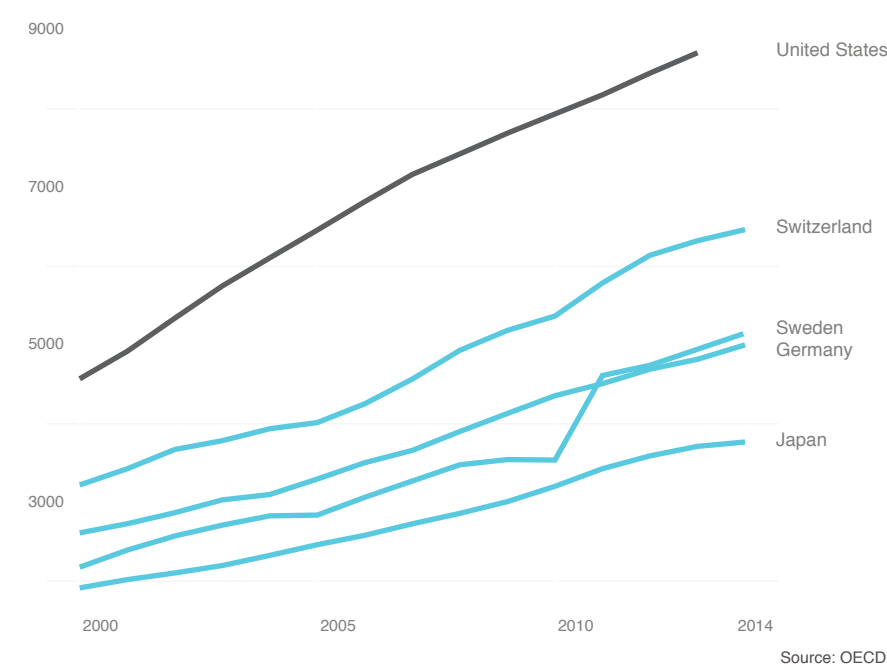


The US spends more than twice on health per capita when compared to other developed countries with similar health standards. A system where providers cater to clients who do not get to see the bill, generally paid by insurers, breaks the free-market rules which could otherwise better self-regulate pricing. What seems free ends up as hefty insurance premiums. Since most employers pay for health insurance, people commonly forget that, ultimately, they pay for the most expensive health system in the world - though arguably among the worst in developed nations*.

* U.S. Health in International Perspective: Shorter Lives, Poorer Health" (2013) National Institutes of Health

Per capta health spending

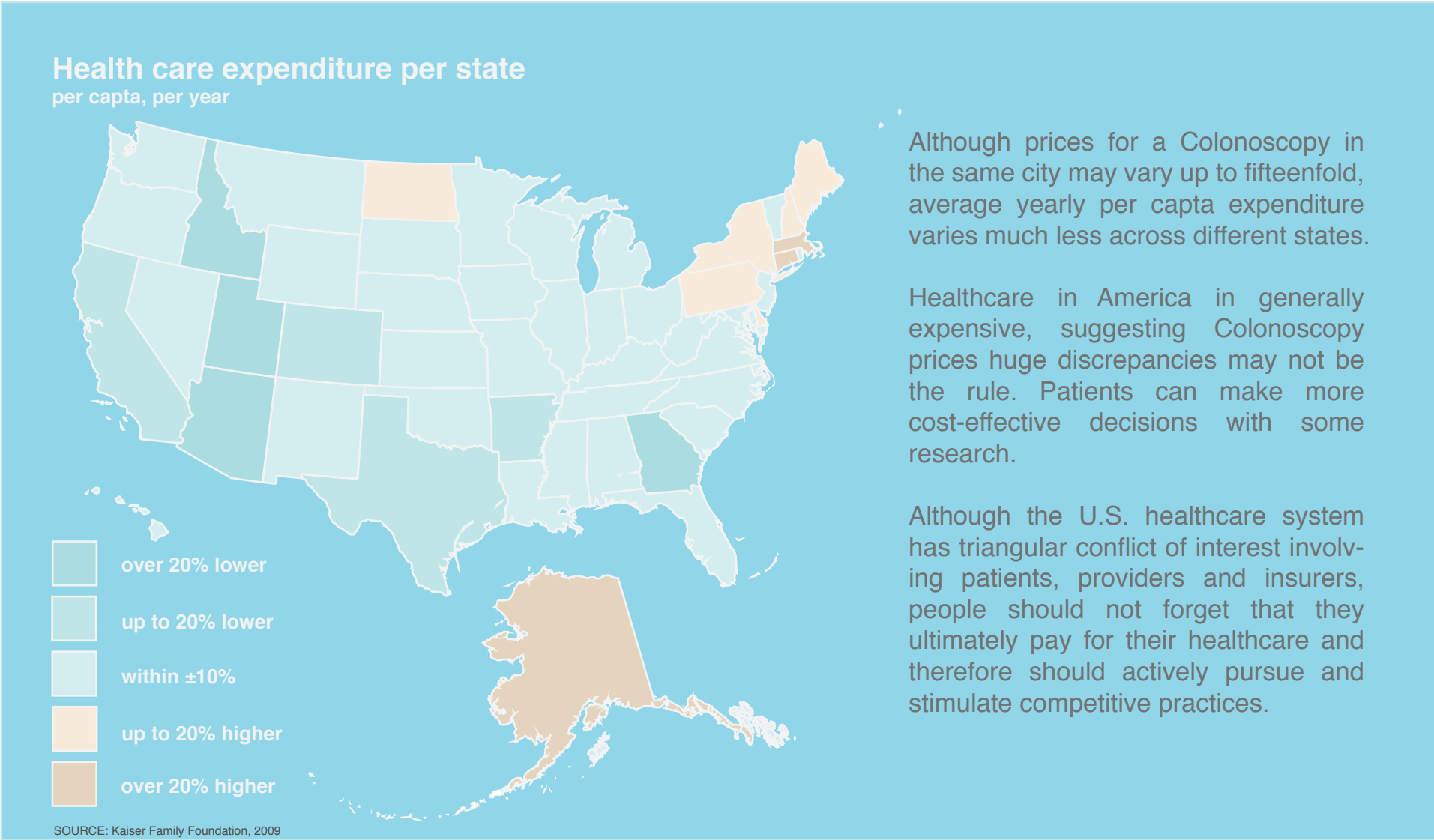
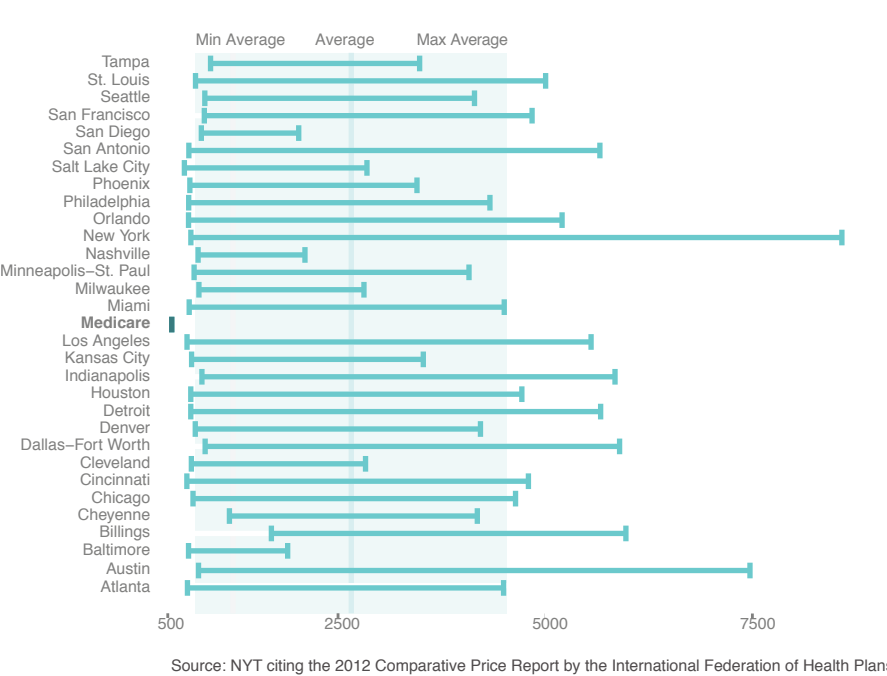
USD spent per year, adjusted for PPP



Data about the cost of Colonoscopies, the most expensive routine exam, shows big differences in prices, even within same cities. There are numerous tricks to charge more from insurers for the same procedure, such as the inclusion of unnecessary anesthesia, use of special facilities and others. Medicare, the government health plan for the elderly, is proof that doctors are willing to do it for less.

Price for a Colonoscopy across America

Actual prices paid (USD), min and max, in different US cities.



Although prices for a Colonoscopy in the same city may vary up to fifteenfold, average yearly per capita expenditure varies much less across different states.

Healthcare in America is generally expensive, suggesting Colonoscopy prices huge discrepancies may not be the rule. Patients can make more cost-effective decisions with some research.

Although the U.S. healthcare system has a triangular conflict of interest involving patients, providers and insurers, people should not forget that they ultimately pay for their healthcare and therefore should actively pursue and stimulate competitive practices.