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Breaking Down Barriers: Finding the Sweet Spot Between Affordability and High-Quality



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As healthcare costs continue to rise, patients, insurance companies and other payors and healthcare providers alike face the challenge of balancing high-quality care with affordability. It is essential for healthcare systems to provide patients with the care they need at a price they can afford without compromising on quality.

Key Points

Affordable care with high-quality standards in healthcare is not just a lofty goal but an achievable reality. It is about ensuring that every patient has access to the care they need and when they need it. At Affidea, we aim to create a strong culture of quality where every clinical team member feels empowered and encouraged to participate in the entire process of improving patient care. We have implemented various initiatives to ensure that our patients receive the best possible care, with high safety standards, at a price they can afford.

Introduction

Pursuing affordable care while meeting high-quality standards in healthcare is one of the most pressing issues facing our society today.

As healthcare costs continue to rise, patients are increasingly struggling to access the care they need, while healthcare providers find it increasingly challenging to deliver high-quality care without compromising on cost. It is clear that something needs to change.

However, what does affordable care with high-quality standards in healthcare actually mean?

At its most basic level, it means providing patients with the care they need at a price they can afford without compromising on quality. This is not an easy task, but it is an essential one if we want to create a healthcare system that is sustainable and effective.

There is also the need to improve patient outcomes and support the move to a patient-centric integrated model of care. This is not simply a system that prioritises treatment but one that can also predict and prevent diseases, a system where the patient is taken care of from prevention to follow-up.

The new care delivery model is an integrated one, in an out-of-hospital state-of-the-art setting, where patients are offered tailor-made integrated services including outpatient consultations, laboratory facilities, advanced diagnostic imaging and low complexity treatment, based on their symptoms, history and risk factors. This can help reducing the overall cost of care by decreasing length of hospitalisation, while improving patient outcomes.

A study published in the Journal of Health Economics found that the use of outpatient services reduced healthcare costs by up to 40% compared

to inpatient services^[1]. Additionally, more accessible outpatient services have resulted in reduced length of hospital stays and the risk of hospital-acquired infections.

At Affidea, we aim to create a strong culture of quality where every clinical team member feels empowered and encouraged to participate in the entire process of improving patient care. We do this through our care delivery model, which comprises a variety of polyclinics, which provide the full range of diagnostic imaging, laboratory evaluations, subspecialty expertise and low-complexity surgery.

Another option is through our Centres of Excellence in specific specialities that oversee the patient's health condition from prevention to treatment and follow-up such as our Centres of Excellence in breast care, BrustZentrum in Zurich, or the Fortius Clinic in London, specialised in orthopaedics and sports medicine.

At the same time, we need to ensure that quality standards remain high.

This means investing in Peer Review and other quality control mechanisms to ensure patients receive accurate diagnoses and appropriate treatment.

The Peer Review system we put in place at Affidea is not used as a parameter for an Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation, but to ensure high quality and safety in everyday practice and support further professional development requirements. It provides the opportunity for our clinical teams to learn and grow together, benefit from each other's sub-speciality expertise and experience, and ultimately, join their forces for a better clinical outcome.

At Affidea, we believe that affordable care with high-quality standards in healthcare is not just a lofty goal but an achievable reality, and therefore imperative.

We have implemented various initiatives to ensure that our patients receive the best possible care, with high safety standards, at a price they can afford. This includes our Dose Excellence program, which minimises radiation exposure from diagnostic procedures while maintaining high-quality images. It also includes an Imaging Insights Business Intelligence tool that regularly updates and correlates multiple data sources into one consolidated view.

It keeps the clinical teams well informed, allowing them to focus on optimising operational efficiencies, clinical excellence and the best patient experience.

This program has been implemented in all of our European centres and has resulted in an average reduction of radiation dose levels by over 45%. As a result, we received the highest recognition at the European level, where more than 55% of the centres awarded for radiation protection by the European Society of Radiology, displayed on the Eurosafe Wall of Stars, are Affidea centres.

Ultimately, pursuing affordable care with high-quality standards in healthcare is not just a question of economics or efficiency. It is a question of values and priorities. It is about ensuring that every patient has access to the care they need, when they need it, without society as a whole being burdened by ever-increasing costs. It is about investing in our communities' health and our society's well-being.

By embracing innovation, investing in quality control mechanisms, and putting the needs of our patients first, we can create a healthcare system that is affordable, accessible, and of the highest possible quality.

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