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Low back pain & the value proposition

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Low back pain is one of the most common health complaints, affecting eight out of ten people at some time in their lives. Further, LBP is identified as the number-one cause of disability worldwide. LBP is not only prevalent, but it has enormous economic consequences and current management practices have led to rising costs without evidence of improvement in the quality of care. A novel consideration to address this issue is the so-called value proposition where value is defined as health outcomes that matter to patients divided by cost of delivering these outcomes. Based on this concept, the most powerful strategy to reduce cost is improving patient-centered outcomes which can be realized with integrated practice units or coordinated team care. This strategy supports the creation of value by caring for a patient's condition over the full cycle of care, rather than by a single hospital stay, care site, specialty, or intervention. This can be achieved by tracking valid outcome measures that assess multi-dimensional outcomes that matter most to patients. In this model, collaboration of care between disciplines plays a role managing appropriate cases based on clinical needs and patient preferences. Adoption of the value proposition and organization around coordinated team-based care is an integral step for improving clinical outcomes and managing the cost of care.

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