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## Medical Care Highlights VA's Community-Based Outpatient Clinics

The July issue of *Medical Care* features five HSR&D studies of VA's fast growing Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs). A team of HSR&D investigators was charged with evaluating key aspects of the CBOCs and then comparing the services CBOCs provide with the same services provided at VA medical centers. The researchers focused on: access to care, quality of care, utilization, patient satisfaction, and cost. Findings show that: patients in CBOCs perceive fewer problems with access and timeliness of care (eg, shorter waiting times) than do traditional VA clinic patients; CBOCs provide a similar level of quality of care as VAMCs in regard to prevention and disease detection; and total costs of care for veteran patients at CBOCs are lower compared to costs of care for patients treated in VAMCs. There were some areas in which CBOCs did not appear to perform as well as VAMCs. For example, CBOC patients had more visits with their primary care provider, but few specialty visits. This may warrant further investigation.

Chapko MK, Borowsky SJ, Fortney JC, Hedeem AH, Hoegle M, Maciejewski ML, Lukas CV. Evaluation of the Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinics. *Medical Care* July 2002;40(7):555-560.

Fortney JC, Borowsky SJ, Hedeem AN, Maciejewski ML, Chapko MK. VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics: Access and utilization performance measures. *Medical Care* July 2002;40(7):561-569.

Hedeem AN, Heagerty PJ, Fortney JC, Borowsky SJ, Walder DJ, Chapko MK. VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics: Quality of performance measures. *Medical Care* July 2002;40(7):570-577.

Borowsky SJ, Nelson D, Fortney JC, Hedeem AN, Bradley J, Chapko MK. VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics: Performance Measures based on patient perceptions of care. *Medical Care* July 2002;40(7):578-586.

Maciejewski ML, Chapko MK, Hedeem AN, Fortney JC. VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics: Cost performance measures. *Medical Care* July 2002;40(7):587-595.

This research was funded through the VA's Under Secretary's Office.

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*MANAGEMENT BRIEF* is produced by the Management Decision and Research Center, a program within VA's Office of Research & Development, Health Services Research & Development Service. **Please take a moment to give us your thoughts and suggestions about Management Brief by sending us an e-mail at [MDRC.Boston@med.va.gov](mailto:MDRC.Boston@med.va.gov).**