

Study deemed successful

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The concept of "pay-for-performance" to improve health care and reduce costs has been proven in a year-long study conducted by Oklahoma City-based MedEncentive, officials said Monday.

In a study released at the 5th Annual Information Therapy in Park City, Utah, MedEncentive officials showcased their study that focused on so-called evidence-based medical care and information therapy for 600 city employees and dependents in Duncan.

"The results of this study have huge implications for the future of health care in this country," MedEncentive chief executive officer Jeff Greene said.

Physicians were compensated for accessing MedEncentive's Web site to declare compliance to or provide a reason for deviation from evidence-based medicine guidelines and for prescribing information to their patients for each office visit.

Patients were instructed to go online to receive the prescribed information about their diagnosis and treatment and to confirm they followed the doctor's advice in exchange for reimbursement of their office visit co-pay.

The study confirmed four hypotheses about the program's impact, Greene said:

A re-distribution of expenditures among cost categories (hospital, doctor, pharmacy, administration and other) would occur.

Defensive medicine would be abated.

Patients would perceive the program's information therapy as a useful health management tool.

The degree of voluntary participation by independent physicians and city government employees, retirees and dependents would be adequate to affect cost containment.

A copy of the entire report can be downloaded at www.medencentive.com.

Global expenditures for the city's health plan decreased 11.5 percent for a savings of \$267,149.