

2024 PRE-FILED TESTIMONY

TOP AREAS OF CONCERN FOR MEETING THE BENCHMARK



Workforce shortages



Rising pharmaceutical costs



Hospital closures



Behavioral and primary health care demand outpacing supply



highlighted the widespread impacts of hospital closures and ongoing pandemic response

IMPACTS OF RECENT MARKET DISRUPTIONS

1. Delays of care
2. Increased strain on workforce
3. Care shifting to higher-cost facilities
4. Increased travel times for patients

TOP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR PAYERS

Comprehensive **health planning** and enhanced collection of **patient demographic data** to better assess health care inventory and need in the Commonwealth

TOP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR PROVIDERS

Payment reforms that increase reimbursements for **primary care** and ensure **equitable parity** between entities statewide, particularly community and safety net providers

PAYERS



made changes to **shift more care to low-cost sites** and reduce inpatient stays



cited **high-cost drugs**, including GLP-1 medications, as a main area of concern for cost growth

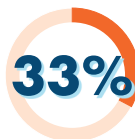


made changes to plan design and data collection to **address health inequities**

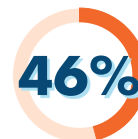
PROVIDERS



raised **workforce challenges**, including high labor costs, burnout, and competition



recommended action to reduce **administrative burden** on providers



called for reimbursement of **innovative care strategies** that address population health



MASSACHUSETTS
HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION

This includes pre-filed testimony submissions from 9 payers and 24 providers and hospitals. Testimony can be found on the HPC's website at [MassHPC.gov](https://www.masshpc.gov).

2024 PRE-FILED TESTIMONY



HEALTH EQUITY

- 56% of payers mentioned using member demographic data and plan design to **address health inequities** and 42% of providers have **strengthened their demographic data collection capabilities** to better identify and address health disparities among their patients.
- 21% of providers cited their work to recruit and retain a **diverse and culturally competent staff** to be better suited to address the social needs of their patient populations.
- 33% of payers expressed strong support for shifting towards **value-based care** and expanding access to care through innovative models, such as increased care screenings and **health equity programming**.



HEALTH CARE AFFORDABILITY

- 67% of payers cited **high provider prices** as a key area of concern for their organization.
- 54% of providers called for **equitable reimbursement rates**, such as ensuring appropriate reimbursement structures for high public-payer providers.
- 44% of payers cited **increased utilization of behavioral health services** as a potential driver of cost growth.



WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

- 50% of providers raised **workforce challenges** in their testimony, including higher labor and supply costs, provider burnout, and demand/competition for new talent.
- 33% of payers recommended **policies that support healthcare workforce expansion**, such as investment in primary care and behavioral health training.



MARKET OVERSIGHT

- 56% of payers and 16% of providers recommended **state-wide health planning** to have an inventory available health care resources and health care needs.
- 44% of payers recommended **prohibition on facility fees** and adoption of **site neutral payments**.
- 33% of payers recommended expansion of – and **better enforcement policies** for – the health care cost-growth benchmark and the HPC’s Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) process.



PHARMACEUTICAL COSTS

- 78% of payers cited **high-cost drugs**, including GLP-1 medications, as a main area of concern for cost growth.
- 56% of payers recommended **enhanced authority for the HPC to monitor and regulate pharmaceutical costs**.
- 33% of payers identified lowering **pharmaceutical costs** as a primary goal.
- 25% of providers recommended ensuring protections for **340B and affordable prescription drug costs**.

- 38% of providers support **primary care and behavioral health workforce pipeline** strategies such as tuition-free medical school, loan forgiveness, scholarships, programs for clinicians from other countries, programs that don’t require a four-year degree, and subsidized malpractice insurance premiums.
- 25% of providers recommended that Massachusetts join the **Nurse Licensure Compact** to address workforce challenges

