Principles for Consumerism in Value-Based Care

Health care consumerism has been defined as approaches that put “economic purchasing power—and decision-making—in the hands of participants.” [1] Together, health care consumerism and value-based payment (VBP) strategies can be leveraged to address overall quality improvement and cost to advance value-based care. The Patient-Centered Priorities Work Group developed these Principles to define an approach to health care consumerism in the context of value-based care that: 1) mitigates negative impacts on access to high-value care, 2) is responsive to patient goals and preferences, and 3) aligns incentives under consumerism with those of VBP models.

1. The primary goal of health care consumerism should be supporting a person's ability to receive a high-quality health care that best aligns with their goals, expectations, and preferences for services in a culturally relevant way. Reductions in cost, while important, should be secondary benefits.

2. Payers, providers, and purchasers should directly engage people in design of consumer-oriented plans.

3. Any approach to consumerism should consider health equity and avoid implementing any incentive or policy that could exacerbate disparities.

4. Consumerism approaches should create meaningful choice by first designing the system in a way that works well for all individuals, including those with limited resources and capacities to engage. For individuals who elect to customize their care, the system should provide a manageable set of options.

5. Clear and transparent information is essential to support decision-making. Consumerism approaches should provide individuals with the tools and transparency needed to make choices that align with their personal preferences and financial considerations.

6. Financial risk should be manageable and only apply to areas where people have the ability and opportunity to make choices.

7. Incentives for individuals under health care consumerism should be aligned with and complementary to the incentives created for providers under VBP models.