This week marks the debut of JAMA Health Forum as a peer-reviewed, open-access, online journal focused on health policy, health care systems, and global and public health. The journal is the newest member of the family of JAMA Network specialty journals. In January 2020, JAMA Health Forum was launched as an online health policy channel (https://jamanetwork.com/channels/health-forum), posting insights and commentaries by a wide range of US and international authors, invited commentaries by health policy experts, and news stories on timely policy issues and reports. As of April 8, 2021, these posts have been viewed approximately 1.7 million times by readers around the world.

Since JAMA Health Forum went live as a health policy channel, the world has been rocked by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. In the US, racism and racial inequities in health outcomes have become brutally apparent, and a new President and Congress have taken office after an especially contentious election. Numerous commentaries and news reports on JAMA Health Forum have addressed the implications of these issues for health policy and health care delivery. As this health policy channel transforms into the peer-reviewed journal, JAMA Health Forum, its mission is to publish original research, evidence-based reports, and opinion about national and global health policy; innovative approaches to health care delivery; and health care economics, access, quality, safety, equity, and reform. As the team of editors leading the new journal, we are enthusiastic about fulfilling this mission in collaboration with the journal’s authors and reviewers and with the editing and publishing staff at JAMA Network. The strategic direction of the journal will be guided by an editorial board composed of leaders in health policy and public health. We invite readers to engage with the journal by commenting on articles on the journal’s website; following the journal on social media via Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter; and listening to the journal’s monthly podcast summaries of new content and interviews with featured authors.

The articles published this week in JAMA Health Forum provide a preview of the policy-relevant content that will be featured each week in the journal. Joynt Maddox and colleagues assess the costs and outcomes of patients undergoing joint replacement surgery under Medicare bundled payments to surgeons, hospitals, and rehabilitation centers. Ko and Glied use a difference-in-difference analysis to compare health care utilization among Medicaid beneficiaries in New York City with those elsewhere in New York State after a paid sick leave policy was mandated for workers in the city; an invited commentary by Heymann and Sprague considers the broader policy implications of that study. Misra-Hebert and colleagues examine health care utilization among patients with newly diagnosed COVID-19 who were enrolled in a home-monitoring program; and one of us (A.M.Z.) comments about the methodologic considerations of that observational study. Chernew provides a Viewpoint on the need for more focus in alternative payment models; he is also featured discussing this commentary in the first episode of JAMA Health Forum monthly podcasts. Also this week, the journal continues the timely publication of JAMA Forum commentaries and In the News articles.

Looking ahead, many challenges in health policy are unresolved and the need for strong evidence to guide health policy decision-making continues. Our goal is for JAMA Health Forum to play a leading role as a peer-reviewed journal, bringing rigorous evidence forward from a diverse community of authors to inform readers who will use this evidence to improve health outcomes and advance health equity.

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Debut of JAMA Health Forum as a Peer-Reviewed Journal

ARTICLE INFORMATION


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