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INTERMOUNTAIN, GEISINGER SHARE THE SPOTLIGHT IN OBAMA TALK

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Intermountain, Geisinger share the spotlight in Obama talk

June 12, 2009 | Bernie Monegain, Editor



President Obama in Green Bay, Wis.

GREEN BAY, WI – President Barack Obama on Thursday turned the spotlight on healthcare IT leaders Intermountain Healthcare in Salt Lake City and Geisinger Health in rural Philadelphia.

"We have to ask why places like the Geisinger Health system in rural Pennsylvania, Intermountain Health in Salt Lake City or communities like Green Bay can offer high-quality care at costs well below average, but other places in America can't," Obama told a packed gymnasium at Green Bay Southwest High School.

"We need to identify the best practices across the country, learn from the success and replicate that success elsewhere," he said. "And we should change the warped incentives that reward doctors and hospitals based on how many tests or procedures they prescribe, even if those tests or procedures aren't necessary or result from medical mistakes. Doctors across this country did not get into the medical profession to be bean counters or paper pushers, to be lawyers or business executives. They became doctors to heal people. And that's what we must free them to do."

Obama has repeatedly held up the use healthcare information technology as a means not only to improve patient care, but also to reduce costs.



Marc Probst

Marc Probst, the CIO at Intermountain Healthcare, said digitization is critical to achieving both quality and efficiency. But he urged a closer look at what Intermountain, Geisinger, the Mayo Clinic and others have done to create systems that could transform healthcare.

"There are proven models that should be examined closely as part of the process associated with HIT incentives," he said in an op ed piece in the June issue of *Healthcare IT News*.

"What these models share is a priority on standardization," he wrote. "Creating standards that can be implemented for HIT systems across the entire country is not as daunting as it sounds."

Probst is a member of the new federal advisory committee on healthcare information technology.

In Green Bay, Obama called for a government-run public health plan as part of the mix for insuring healthcare for all Americans.

"In all these reforms, our goal is simple: the highest-quality healthcare at the lowest-possible cost," he said. "We want to fix what's broken and build on what works."

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Rating Guy says:

June 12, 2009 | 5:00PM GMT

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Rural Philadelphia is like Green Bay being rural Chicago.

Sorry but this guy's advisors are dead wrong. First, Green Bay is in the middle of the pack in terms of affordability, efficiency and quality. Run the data, I have and that little town just doesn't get the grade! Value equals quality, efficiency, affordability, safety, and experience, and they just don't have it! Secondly, what does a town of 100,000 people have to do with American health care? I guess it is safe to hold a town meeting in a high school gym in a market without disparity or volume for that matter. Green Bay is not statistically significant.

Geisinger and Mayo Clinic and Mass Gnl for that matter are not models of anything but variation. They each have unwarranted variation that is unexplained by risk or severity on the most basic outcome; mortality. Simply look at the day of discharge and mortality and not only is Geisinger totally inconsistent by day of week and service, their sister hospital, Wyoming Valley doesn't match intramural comparisons. So yes central Pennsylvania is a microcosm of the universe that has the same problems that other real markets have, yet those larger markets must deal with so many other issues that competition, and health plans and disparity weigh on markets more common to America.

Look at the data and recognitions, Mayo Clinic and Mass Gnl are not places to visit for the daily blocking and tackling of care in America.

So, in summary Value is to Geisinger, Mayo and Green Bay as Danville Pa is to Philadelphia...a long geographic distance of 150 miles and maybe a decade in terms of market dynamics.

Yes there are better performers, but these guys just aren't it! Let the data speak.

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jwmbosco says:

June 12, 2009 | 12:59PM GMT

[just curious](#)

Where is "rural Philadelphia?"

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