

Foreword

This report is the second of a new series of publications reviewing the quality of health care across selected OECD countries. As health costs continue to climb, policy makers increasingly face the challenge of ensuring that substantial spending on health is delivering value for money. At the same time, concerns about patients occasionally receiving poor quality health care led to demands for greater transparency and accountability. Despite this, there is still considerable uncertainty over which policies work best in delivering health care that is safe, effective and provides a good patient experience, and which quality-improvement strategies can help deliver the best care at the least cost. *OECD Reviews of Health Care Quality* seek to highlight and support the development of better policies to improve quality in health care, to help ensure that the substantial resources devoted to health are being used effectively in supporting people to live healthier lives.

Israel provides an interesting case study for this series. While many OECD countries are currently striving to improve primary care, Israel's efforts over the past decade have developed one of the most sophisticated programmes to monitor the quality of primary care across OECD countries. On the other hand, these practices do not extend to Israel's hospitals, which are characterised by high levels of occupancy and comparatively less information on the quality of care they deliver. A diverse immigrant population and deep inequalities further complicate the task of policy makers, who have been making efforts to improve health outcomes among the disadvantaged. After having sustained lower health care spending than most OECD countries for some time, Israel's health system is now coming under pressure as the population ages and chronic diseases rise, which are likely to continue within the context of a tight fiscal environment. As with other OECD countries, Israel's government will need to ensure that significant spending on health continues to deliver value for money. This report seeks to provide constructive advice to further these efforts, informed by the experience of OECD countries at large.



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