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Dartmouth College, Brookings Institution Announce Partnership Mark McClellan and Elliott Fisher to Head Joint Health Policy Initiative

Washington D.C.— A program to improve the value of health care by addressing uneven quality and excess costs was unveiled today by the Brookings Institution and Dartmouth College. The initiative will link population-based research programs at Dartmouth's newly-created Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice (IHPCP) with the health policy research and development expertise of scholars at the Brookings Institution.

The Brookings-Dartmouth initiative will focus on bringing researchers, lawmakers, and regulators together to develop and implement policies to address major failings in the U.S. health care system. An exchange program for Brookings scholars and Dartmouth students and faculty will be key to allowing interaction and collaboration between the two institutions.

“Over the last several years, Elliott Fisher and his colleagues at Dartmouth have demonstrated the tremendous variations in health care practice and spending across the U.S.,” said College President James Wright. “The Brookings-Dartmouth initiative is a wonderful opportunity to translate Dartmouth's health research into innovative policy reform. We are delighted to be entering into a relationship with Brookings to address one of the most critical domestic issue facing our nation today.”

The program will be directed by Brookings Senior Fellow Mark B. McClellan, MD, PhD and Elliott S. Fisher, MD, MPH, Director of the Center for Health Care Research and Reform within the IHPCP at Dartmouth. McClellan is the former commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS.) Fisher is the Primary Investigator for the Dartmouth Atlas Project and lead author on a series of papers highlighting the paradoxical relationship between spending and quality in the U.S. health care system.

“Among the many challenges facing U.S. health care, one of the most important how we translate good ideas into practical solutions and get them implemented,” said Dr. Fisher. “Dr. McClellan and his colleagues at Brookings are uniquely qualified and have an outstanding track record of success in this area.”

Much of the work to be undertaken in the joint project will rely on the extensive population-based health care databases maintained by Dartmouth. Research from these databases has provided the basis for the Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care, now a standard reference for anyone studying U.S. health policy and reform. Initial projects will model approaches to modifying current Medicare physician and other provider payments, as a means for assessing the impact of potential reforms on providers and the Medicare Trust Funds.

Said Dr. McClellan: “Dartmouth is not only leading the way in identifying short falls in quality and cost in the current health care system, as well as in identifying and evaluating ways to fix the problems. With all the Congressional attention around improving Medicare’s payment systems, now is the time to turn these ideas into policy action.”

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