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A Pound of Cure

A Content Analysis of Health Information on Web Sites of Top-Ranked HMOs



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Health maintenance organizations (HMOs) have come under attack in recent years for paying more attention to their profitability than their commitment to the health and wellness of their members. Stories abound in the news media of individuals' battles with the bureaucracy of prior authorizations, required primary physician referrals to see specialists, denial of coverage for preexisting conditions, and, in some cases, denial of care altogether. Congress still has not passed a final "patients' bill of rights" bill that both houses debated at length in 1999 (Babington, 1999, p. A2), and an article in a recent issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) evaluated HMO quality of care (Himmelstein, Woodhandler,

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