



**eBook**

# **How You Can Help Improve America's Healthcare System**

Why providers should make the move to advanced primary care



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# How advanced primary care benefits providers

America's healthcare system is broken.

This isn't an overstatement. [According to a 2023 report from the Commonwealth Fund](#), Americans spend more on healthcare than our peer nations.

At the same time, among wealthy nations, our country has the highest death rates from treatable or avoidable ailments – including the highest maternal and infant death rates.

Adding to these self-inflicted wounds are some alarming trends, including the fact that our country's population is [growing](#) and [aging](#), and there is an ongoing [shortage of doctors](#).

That's a terrible trifecta of issues, to be sure, but there is hope on the horizon. In 2022 alone, [more than 28,000 individuals](#) graduated from medical school, bringing a new generation of providers into the industry.

Then there's the fact that, [according to a survey from Gallup](#), the majority of Americans no longer believe our healthcare system is working. People are paying attention and, post-pandemic, are looking for solutions to make the system better.

Advanced primary care (APC) can be one of those solutions, and in this eBook, we will be making the case that **both new and veteran providers should embrace the APC model to better serve patients and themselves.**

Specifically, we will be talking about:

 <p><b>The challenges we face in U.S. healthcare</b></p> <p>→</p>	 <p><b>How APC addresses these challenges</b></p> <p>→</p>	 <p><b>Why providers should embrace APC</b></p> <p>→</p>
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## The challenges we face in U.S. healthcare

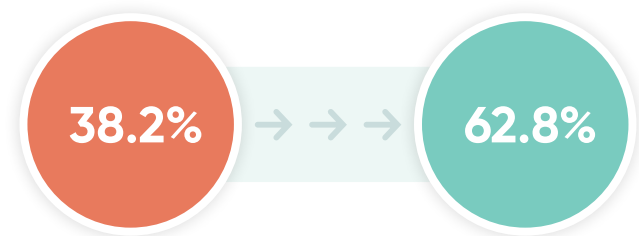
In 1970, Americans spent an average of \$335 per person per capita on healthcare.

Adjusted for inflation, that amounts to \$1,914 in 2021 dollars. And yet, in 2021 alone, the actual per capita cost was actually \$12,914 per person.<sup>1</sup>

While part of this massive increase can be attributed to factors such as advances in technology and changing demographics, that doesn't change the fact that U.S. healthcare is often prohibitively expensive, a reality that discourages rather than encourages people to seek preventive care.

This is critically important, since preventive care is the key to improving the health of not just the individual, but also the country as a whole.

Another challenge is provider burnout. [According to a study published in Mayo Clinic Proceedings](#), feelings of burnout by physicians jumped from just 38.2% to 62.8% between 2020 and 2021.



These findings reveal just how much damage the COVID-19 pandemic inflicted upon physicians (and other healthcare workers), whether it was from long hours, mentally and emotionally draining circumstances, or the politicization of healthcare during the once-in-a-century event.

But it's not just the pandemic that can be blamed for the increase in physician burnout.

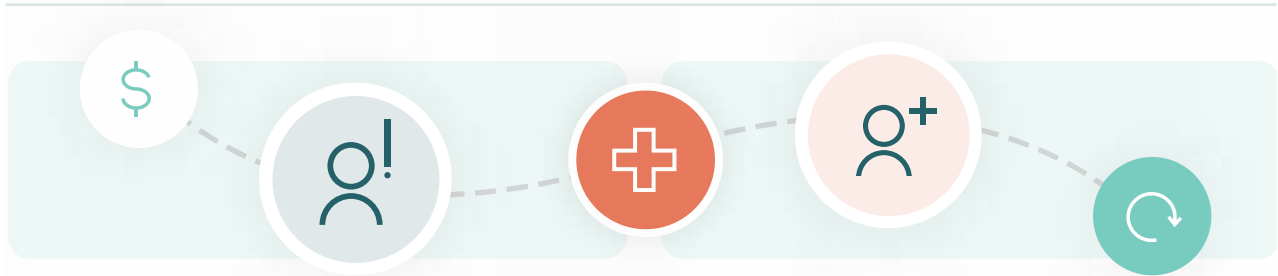
The way the healthcare system itself is currently structured should also be on trial. It encourages an environment where people lack preventive care because they simply can't afford to regularly visit a doctor. Also, physicians face a never-ending churn of patients, resulting in them spending less time with patients and more time with acute cases in need of immediate treatment.

Given all this – recent events, the constant sprinting from patient to patient, the mental toll of treating patients who have waited far too long for treatment – it's no wonder burnout has and will continue to increase. And that's without taking into account the sheer amount of administrative work physicians have to do, an amount that has now reached 15.5 hours per week on average.<sup>2</sup>

1. "How has U.S. spending on healthcare changed over time?" Peterson-KFF, February 7, 2023.  
2. Medscape Physician Compensation Report, 2023.



## How APC addresses these challenges



At its core, APC is all about healthcare as it should be: focused on higher-quality care, increased patient engagement, and utilizing data to improve overall population health.

In contrast to the current system that relies on transactional and incident-based interactions between patients and physicians, APC is a much more proactive and comprehensive approach.

The driving force behind this approach is the idea of whole health – building a foundation for patients that encourages a healthy lifestyle and leveraging data to understand social determinants that affect large populations and create risks.

APC reframes primary care, making it the heart of health management rather than a gatekeeper for specialist diagnosis and treatment. Patients are able to see a doctor quickly, receive thorough and thoughtful care from someone who knows them, and get follow-up support after seeing other experts and providers.

The tenets of the model are:

**Accessibility** to more providers, smart scheduling, low- to no-cost visits, convenient locations, and no wait times

**Empathetic listening** that goes beyond prescriptive medicine, building connections and understanding a person's whole health

**Care coordination** to prevent gaps in communication and treatment when specialty care is appropriate, including follow-up and integration into the member's care plan

**Time-rich appointments** that allow people to be heard and providers to understand them beyond their symptoms

**Primary care providers** who have the time, support, and staff to provide most of a person's care – care that in today's system is being outsourced to specialists

**An informatics platform** that identifies health risk opportunities and provides actionable insight into utilization



**Professional health coaches** who use the **Transtheoretical Change Model** to help patients improve their lifestyles and achieve life goals

**Culture change** from people seeing their care team as an extension of their friends and family and the powerful realization that they, themselves, are in control of their own health

Beyond individual patients, APC has been proven to bring down the total cost of care. This is critical given that just last year, **Gallup found** that 38% of Americans had put off or skipped outright medical care due to cost.

Such a shamefully high percentage should not happen in a developed nation, let alone the United States. And while substantial – arguably wholesale – change absolutely needs to happen to the entire healthcare system, any steps taken to promote better overall health among the population is an important step.

APC, through empowering patients to take control of their health and fostering proactive engagement with their healthcare providers, results in fewer insurance claims and lowered costs for the entire healthcare system.








## Why providers should embrace APC


Improving patient experience and population health while reducing costs is a common set of goals for all health systems, of course. But just as important is a system that keeps providers healthy as well because when physicians experience fatigue and burnout, adequate care becomes much more challenging to achieve.

In the APC model, providers are able to:

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**Spend extended time with patients**  
This means no more short appointments that reflect a quantity-over-quality approach that burns out providers. In the APC model, visits are 30- to 60-minutes long, allowing time for empathetic listening and treating the whole person. In other words, instead of managing symptoms, providers have time to get to the root causes of health problems.
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**Practice to the top of their license**  
Many primary care providers are qualified to offer more in the way of care but limited time stops them from doing so. Not so in the APC model. Instead of sending members to specialists, APC providers are empowered to take the time to treat members onsite, which reduces costs associated with specialty care.
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**Enjoy a manageable patient load**  
Shuffling large volumes of patients through appointment times is not part of the APC model. Providers see up to 10 members per day, allowing them the time they need to offer whole person care and prevention while preventing fatigue.
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**Focus on behavior change**  
Primary care providers often choose this field because of a genuine desire to do good. The APC model is ideal for this type of provider because of its continued support for behavior change, empathetic listening, and dedicated health coaching.

Most of all, APC providers are able to get behind a care philosophy they actually believe in – with the healthcare model they need to support their patients at a higher level.

An integral part of the APC model is care coordination, which helps prevent gaps in communication and treatment when specialty care is appropriate, including follow-up and integration into a patient's care plan. It also takes the strain off of individual providers by supplying them with a support team not just for when a patient is in for a visit, but also beyond.

Care coordination is a highly collaborative and organized system, with patients, providers, and health coaches all working together to develop a personalized care plan focused on improving a patient's long-term health.



## A better way to achieve better care for patients

The very things that make the APC model unique also make it powerful and effective. Not just for patients, but also for the individuals who have dedicated their lives to helping others achieve better health.



Within the model, providers have everything they need to serve their patients and communities the way they were trained to. They deliver the majority of healthcare services – from regular checkups to more serious diagnoses and treatment for injuries, infections, and chronic and acute disease – keeping the majority of a patient's treatment in-house.

And when necessary, a patient can still be referred to a specialist or an outside facility, but coordination of that treatment is managed by the primary clinic so that no gaps in vital information or care are created.

We all know the current U.S. healthcare system isn't working – not for patients, not for the economy, not for providers.

At apree health, our APC model emphasizes the central nature of primary care in a patient's healthcare journey. Our care teams provide 80–90% of the needed care within the confines of the primary care setting. The difference between a traditional medical home and APC is in the data.

By practicing a holistic approach to primary care, our providers can help patients manage those underlying risks while encouraging behavior change that will lead to better health down the line.



**apree health is currently  
hiring providers and other  
healthcare professionals.**

To see our current openings or to learn more about advanced primary care, visit our website at [apreehealth.com](https://apreehealth.com).

Visit our website →

