Can New Technology and Delivery Model Innovation Lead to Meaningful Reductions in US Health Spending?

October 18, 2017

8:30 a.m.   Welcome and Introduction

Stuart Altman, Ph.D., Professor of National Health Policy, Brandeis University

8:45 a.m.   Is the US Healthcare System Immune to Disruptive Innovation? Where are the Opportunities for New Business Models?

Disruptive innovations occur when new entrants target the low-end segment of a market with functional products at low prices and gradually move upmarket offering better functionality at lower process and taking share from incumbent firms. Unlike most other markets healthcare innovations almost always result in higher costs. This reflects unique characteristics like third-party payment for medical services, information asymmetry, regulatory barriers to entry and provider consolidation. This panel will discuss the health sector's resilience to cost reducing innovations and potential opportunities for disruption in different health sectors and the role of policy in enabling new business models.

Speaker: Kevin Schulman, MD, Professor, Duke University Health System

9:45 a.m.   Break

10:00 a.m.   Technologies and Strategies to Move Care out of the Hospital

A key driver of health spending is that many US communities are dominated by powerful health systems that command premium prices. Physician-led organizations that participate in accountable care arrangements are trying to identify high risk patients and keep them out of the hospital through developing alternative sites of care. These efforts include more sophisticated home-based services, convenient low-cost urgent care centers and freestanding ambulatory surgery facilities. New groups will also begin deploying virtual consultations and continuous patient monitoring with sensors and smartphones to respond quickly before patients experience expensive acute events. A key question is whether such initiatives will be strong enough to take market share from incumbents or force them to reduce prices.

Speakers: Tom Hale, Ph.D, Virtual Care Solutions LLC, former Executive Medical
           Director, Mercy Virtual Care Center
           Lindsay Lowder, Senior Director, Payer Engagement and Advocacy,
           Surgical Care Affiliates

11:00 a.m.   Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Medicine

Modern medicine produces a tsunami of information that increasingly available in digital form. Despite medicine's great complexity and inherent uncertainties, efforts are expanding to combine these data with modern computing capabilities to advance the accuracy of diagnosis and treatment choices. New tools could eventually bring sophisticated computer-assisted support for diagnostic and treatment selection to the broad universe of hospitals and clinics. This session will discuss potential applications of artificial intelligence to a range of healthcare problems and will offer a practical assessment of what can be done today versus what is possible in five to ten years.

    Speakers: Joe Kimura, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Atrius Health
                   Michael Zalis, MD, Founder and CMO, QPIDHEALTH

12:00 p.m. Lunch Served

12:30 p.m. When and Where Will the Tech Giants Move into Healthcare?

The world's large technology companies are reshaping industries from retail to financial services. Prior efforts by Silicon Valley companies to disrupt the healthcare industry have encountered numerous challenges but the appeal of making inroads in a $3 trillion industry with vast inefficiencies remains appealing. This session will discuss the cloud-based computing infrastructure and tools being developed by US information technology companies. It will discuss how these technologies could be used to drive innovation in the healthcare sector as well as the unique IT adoption barriers presented by the US healthcare system. It will describe current examples of US healthcare organizations using these tools to improve value, and discuss the future potential for digital transformation in healthcare.

    Speaker: Rebecca Crowe, National Director Business Applications, US Health &
                 Life Sciences, Microsoft

1:30 p.m.   Enabling Efficient Healthcare Business Models – What Should Policymakers Do Next?

    Moderator: Stuart Altman, Ph.D., Professor, Brandeis University
    Panelists: Kevin Schulman, Duke University
                 Kavita Patel, The Brookings Institute

2:00 p.m. Meeting adjourns