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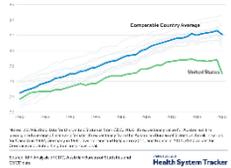
Insights from the Healing American Healthcare Coalition™

September 2022-2



From the Editor: With pandemic pressures easing, the gap between the US and other developed countries continues to widen and it's unclear whether the private sector deals recently announced will help to narrow the gap. To access each article, just click on the headline.

Life expectancy at birth in years, 1980-2021



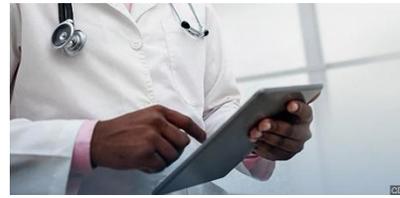
[U.S. life expectancy fell further in 2021 due to Covid](#), by Amruta Khandekar and Raghav Mahobe, Reuters, 8/31/22

TMR Topline – US life expectancy continued to fall during 2021 to 76.1 years, the lowest since 1996, with Covid-related deaths contributing nearly 75% to the decline. The drop from 79.0 years in 2019 is the largest two-year drop in nearly a century according to provisional data from the [CDC](#). The gap in life expectancy between men and women widened with men at 73.2 years, nearly six years less than women.



[Indigenous American and Alaska Natives lost 6 years life expectancy during](#)

[pandemic](#), by Brenna Miller, Lown Institute, 9/6/22
TMR Topline – Life expectancy for Indigenous American and Alaska Natives (IAAN) dropped by [six and a half years](#) during 2020-21, compared with about a two-year decrease for other Americans. Prior to the pandemic, there already was a 2-year life expectancy disparity between IAANs and non-Hispanic white Americans. Social factors like [racism](#), environmental pollution, shaky access to clean water, and limited access to nutritious foods are major factors contributing to the gap.



[Americans give health care system failing mark: AP-NORC poll](#), by Amanda

Seitz, Associated Press, 9/12/22

TMR Topline – A new poll from [The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#) reveals that public satisfaction with the US health care system is remarkably low with only 12% saying it is handled extremely or very well. The public gives even lower marks for how [prescription drug costs](#), the quality of care at nursing homes and mental health care are being handled. Nearly 8 in 10 Americans say they are at least moderately concerned about getting access to quality health care when they need it. Nearly two-thirds of adults believe it's the government's responsibility to ensure coverage, up from 57% in 2019 and 62% in 2017. 58% say they favor a government health insurance plan that anyone can purchase and 80% support the federal government negotiating for lower drug prices.

TMR's Take: Before the pandemic, US healthcare consistently ranked lowest of the 11 high-income countries tracked by the [Commonwealth Fund](#). The average life expectancy at birth in the 38 OECD countries was 81.0 years in [2019](#). The US ranked 29th at 78.9 years falling between the Czech Republic (79.3 years) and Estonia (78.8 years). Japan was highest at 81.4 years; Mexico lowest at 75.1 years. The US states ranged from Hawaii at 81.0 years to West Virginia at 74.4 years. The poll results indicate Americans want a plan like the Allcare plan in ["Healing American Healthcare: a Plan to Provide Quality Care for All while Saving \\$1 Trillion a Year."](#)



[U.S. eyes annual shots as updated Covid vaccines roll out](#), by Ahmed

Heavey, Reuters, 9/6/22

TMR Topline – The redesigned booster shots approved by the FDA target both the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron

subvariants and the original virus. In a recent briefing, White House Covid-19 Response Coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha said for "a large majority of Americans, we are moving to a point where a single annual Covid shot should provide a high degree of protection against serious illness all year. That's an important milestone." Dr. Anthony Fauci said unless a dramatically different variant emerges, annual vaccines should offer enough protection for most people, but that some vulnerable groups might need more frequent vaccinations.

TMR's Take: A recent study published in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) indicates that vaccinations and previous infections significantly reduce the risk of reinfections with the Omicron BA.5 subvariant. The US could reach endemic status with high uptake of the targeted booster.



[In a surprise reversal, FDA committee recommends ALS drug by Cambridge company](#), by Ryan Cross, Boston Globe, 9/7/22

TMR Topline – After voting 6-4 in [March](#) against approval, the FDA's committee of neurology experts voted 7 to 2 in favor of Amylyx Pharmaceuticals drug for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a fatal neurological disease. The recommendation resulted from additional data provided by Amylyx and pleas from patients and their families. ALS has no cure, and most people die within 3 to 5 years of diagnosis. Canadian regulators approved Amylyx's drug in June with the condition that the company submit data from its ongoing Phase 3 clinical study of about 600 patients due to wrap up in 2024.



[United Health inks Medicare Advantage deal with Walmart](#), by Lauren Berryman, Modern Healthcare, 9/7/22

TMR Topline – United Healthcare (UH) and Walmart have agreed to a ten-year commitment to expand Medicare Advantage usage beginning in January at 15 Walmart Health locations in Florida and Georgia before expanding to other parts of the nation. UH Group's Optum subsidiary will provide Walmart Health clinicians with data and analytics to help them provide value-based care for their MA enrollees. If the initial efforts are successful, they will be expanded to serve hundreds of thousands of patients across the

country. Walmart previously formed alliances with Humana and Clover Health. Since 2019, Walmart Health has offered several healthcare services including primary and urgent care, labs, diagnostics, behavioral health, dental, optometry and hearing services at 27 physical locations and via a virtual platform. Increased competition among insurers and expansion of the MA market has [encouraged similar partnerships](#) (e.g., Anthem became Elevance Health in 2021, then signed a deal with the Kroger grocery chain).

TMR's Take: America's largest bricks and mortar retailer and for-profit insurer could become a formidable force in healthcare delivery if the deal works.



[CVS to buy home health-care provider Signify for \\$8 billion](#), Associated Press, 9/5/22

TMR Topline – CVS has announced that it will buy home-health provider Signify Health for \$8 billion. Signify has more than 10,000 employees including physicians and nurses in all 50 states. CVS CEO Karen Lynch said, "This acquisition will enhance our connection to consumers in the home and enables providers to better address patient needs as we execute our vision to redefine the health care experience." CVS also plans to continue Signify's acquisition of Caravan Health announced earlier this year. Caravan works with accountable-care organizations that serve Medicare patients. CVS' effort to branch out from its pharmacy-chain business to other sectors of the healthcare industry began in 2018 when they [purchased health insurer Aetna](#) for \$69 billion.



[FTC probe could delay Amazon's deal for One Medical](#), by Naomi Diaz, Becker's Hospital Review, 9/6/22

TMR Topline – Amazon's proposed \$3.9 billion deal to acquire One Medical's primary care clinics in 25 U.S. markets, is under investigation from the Federal Trade Commission. The FTC is also investigating Amazon's Prime membership program. The One Medical transaction would give Amazon more than 180 clinics with employed physicians across two dozen US markets.

TMR's Take: As an also ran in the Signify Health bidding, Amazon's ambition to disrupt healthcare has hit a wall as CVS Health becomes a force to be reckoned with.