Negative: PCEPI Inflation Index

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

***Resolved: The United States Federal Government should substantially reform its banking, finance, and/or monetary policy***

Summary: There are different ways of measuring the inflation rate, subtle changes can result in minor differences in the outcome and there’s no one “right” way to do it. There are several commonly used standard ways. One is the government’s “Consumer Price Index” (CPI). Another is the Personal Consumption Expenditure Price Index (PCEPI). The Federal Reserve switched to the PCEPI some time ago, so that’s already established in our banking/finance/monetary policy. AFF wants to change from CPI to PCEPI for federal transfer payments (like Social Security), which is fiscal policy, but topicality never stops some Affirmatives from running what they want. The difference in the two measurements will have some difference in the amount of money by which Social Security checks, for example, go up each year, since they are indexed to go up automatically with the inflation rate. PCEPI tends on average (not always) to produce a slightly lower inflation rate than CPI. Therefore, switching from PCEPI to CPI would slightly lower the increase in Social Security checks in the future.

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Negative: PCEPI Inflation Index

TOPICALITY

1. Fiscal policy, not banking / finance / monetary policy

Why It Matters – It’s Not Merely Debater’s Semantics: Difference between fiscal and monetary is essential to understand

Laura Hopper 2018 (Public Affairs Staff, St Louis Federal Reserve) 10 Oct 2018 “Here’s the Difference between Fiscal Policy and Monetary Policy“ <https://www.stlouisfed.org/open-vault/2018/october/difference-between-fiscal-monetary-policy>

Learning the difference between fiscal policy and monetary policy is essential to understanding who does what when it comes to the federal government and the Federal Reserve. The short answer is that Congress and the administration conduct fiscal policy, while the Fed conducts monetary policy.

Fiscal Policy = revenues, taxes, spending and deficits

Laura Hopper 2018 (Public Affairs Staff, St Louis Federal Reserve) 10 Oct 2018 “Here’s the Difference between Fiscal Policy and Monetary Policy“ <https://www.stlouisfed.org/open-vault/2018/october/difference-between-fiscal-monetary-policy>

The word “fiscal” relates to public treasury or revenues. Fiscal policyis a broad term used to refer to the tax and spending policies of the federal government. “Fiscal policy refers to government spending and taxing decisions,” Wheelock said. “Economics textbooks and various economic models usually think of fiscal policy in terms of the size of the government budget deficit, the difference between what the government spends and its revenue.”

Social Security and other transfer payments are “fiscal policy”

Kimberly Amadeo 2020 (Over 20 years of senior-level corporate experience in economic analysis and business strategy; master's in management from the Sloan School of Business at MIT ) updated 31 Jan 2020 “Expansionary Fiscal Policy and How It Affects You” <https://www.thebalance.com/expansionary-fiscal-policy-purpose-examples-how-it-works-3305792>

Expansionary fiscal policy is when the government expands the money supply in the economy using budgetary tools to either increase spending or cut taxes—both of which provide consumers and businesses with more money to spend. ﻿ In the United States, the president influences the process, but Congress must author and pass the bills. Congress has two types of spending. The first is through the annual discretionary spending bill process. They can also increase benefits payments in mandatory programs, which is more difficult because it requires a 60-vote majority in the Senate to pass. The largest mandatory programs are Social Security, Medicare, and welfare programs. Sometimes these payments are called transfer payments because they reallocate funds from taxpayers to targeted demographic groups.

Violation: Plan has Congress change transfer payments, not the Federal Reserve changing monetary policy

The mandates of their plan clearly put them in the category of fiscal policy as defined by our evidence. Their agency is not the Federal Reserve and they are changing levels of government spending, probably to influence the federal deficit. All of that is Fiscal Policy, not monetary.

Impact: Negative team abused

As if this resolution weren’t broad enough. Affirmative wants to add a fourth policy area, “fiscal policy,” on top of the three extremely broad ones we already have. Teach them not to abuse Negative teams by these kinds of tactics by awarding a Negative ballot. They’ll get the hint and stop doing this if enough Judges will enforce the actual Resolution that we all agreed to debate.

BACKUP for T-1. Social Security retirement program doesn’t fit any of the 3 categories of the resolution

Not Monetary Policy: Short-term interest rates and availability + cost of credit in the economy

Federal Reserve 2019. “Monetary Policy” last updated 30 Oct 2019 <https://www.federalreserve.gov/monetarypolicy.htm>

The Federal Reserve conducts the nation's monetary policy by managing the level of short-term interest rates and influencing the overall availability and cost of credit in the economy. Monetary policy directly affects short-term interest rates; it indirectly affects longer-term interest rates, currency exchange rates, and prices of equities and other assets and thus wealth. Through these channels, monetary policy influences household spending, business investment, production, employment, and inflation in the United States.

Not Banking Policy: Social Security was designed to look like a “bank account” where you “deposit” your money and then “get it back” when you retire. But that’s false: It’s just transferring income from workers to retirees

Eric B. Schnurer 2017 (Masters in Public Policy from Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government; J.D. from Columbia University Law School) 12 Dec 2017 “'It's the Grandparents Stealing From the Grandchildren'” <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/12/grandparents-raiding-grandchildren/548117/>

But if FDR’s America was a place where it was dangerous to grow old, it was also a country unaccustomed, and resistant, to large-scale income transfer programs. Social Security therefore was designed to look like, and sold as, simply a government-administered pension program, not “welfare” in any way, shape, or form. The program was supported not by the progressive income tax but by payroll deductions—impliedly pension contributions. Americans were given Social Security numbers, looking like a bank account, and are still sent regular “statements” of their “contributions” and what the projected payouts on those supposed-savings look like. (Medicare was crafted to create the same impression.) This is all a fiction. Because of the carefully cultivated impression that beneficiaries are simply receiving back their “own” money, plus investment gains, Social Security and Medicare are regarded as politically distinct from welfare or other benefits the recipient didn’t “earn.” The crafty Roosevelt understood this, famously declaring that “no damn politician can ever scrap my social-security program.” The remark proved prescient when those protesting Obamacare’s expansion of health care to non-seniors demanded that the government [keep its hands off “their” Medicare](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/27/AR2009072703066_2.html?hpid=topnews&sid=ST2009072703107). But it is hardly “theirs.” The average Medicare recipient receives treatment totaling the full amount of his or her lifetime contributions, plus a market rate-of-return, within the first two years after retirement; after that, it’s all income transfer from other Americans. Over the remaining years of life, the average retiree can expect to receive Social Security benefits amounting to a roughly 30 percent bonus over what she paid into the system (plus interest)—all from Americans currently working.

Not Finance Policy: Finance Policy = financial institution behavior, loans, credit cards and checking accounts.

Cheryl R. Cooper 2019 (Analyst in Financial Economics with Congressional Research Service, the non-partisan policy research agency of Congress) 12 July 2019 “An Overview of Consumer Finance and Policy Issues” <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/R45813.html>

In consumer finance, three types of policy interventions are common: (1) standardized consumer disclosures; (2) regulation to prevent deceptive, unfair, or abusive financial institution practices; and (3) regulation to prevent discrimination in consumer-lending markets. Yet, policymakers need to be aware of unintended consequences of proposed policies, and often find it challenging to determine whether a policy intervention will help or harm a particular market's efficiency.

**END QUOTE. She goes on to say later in the same context QUOTE**:

The major consumer financial markets include mortgage lending, student loans, automobile loans, credit cards and payments, payday loans and other credit alternative financial products, and checking accounts and substitutes.

What kind of policy is it? A social welfare / social insurance / pension plan

Dr. John Hansen 2012 (PhD) “The New Deal: Part II” Virginia Commonwealth University Social Welfare History Project <https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/eras/great-depression/the-new-deal-part-ii/>

With respect to insurance, the act contained both unemployment insurance and old age pensions (commonly known as “Social Security”). The program of [Unemployment Insurance](https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/programs/unemployment-insurance/)was very unpopular with business leaders. To illustrate, as late as 1931, Henry Ford persisted in blaming mass unemployment on individual laziness. He claimed there was plenty of work for those who wanted it!  Yet, packaging unemployment insurance with more popular programs such as old age pensions, Roosevelt was able to pass the legislation. The Social Security Act also contained several federal poor relief programs. Intended to be a continuing federal responsibility, these programs included Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, and Aid to Dependent Children (ADC).

Social Security is simply an income transfer scheme done by taxing (young people) and spending (on old people)

Jim Luke 2015 (teaches economics at Lansing Community College in Michigan) 28 Mar 2015 “Why SS Is Not “Broke” And How The Trust Fund Works“ <https://econproph.com/2015/03/28/why-ss-is-not-broke-and-how-the-trust-fund-works/>

Yes, it’s a basically a flow-through transfer system. We take money from today’s workers to pay today’s older people. Yes, so-called millenials (the generation currently in their 20’s) if they are fortunate enough to have found a job in this slack economy and the millenials’ working parents pay taxes each paycheck. To be precise, 6.2% is deducted from their paycheck and then matched with an equal amount from their employer’s pockets. Their tax money is sent to Washington each quarter by their employer.  That money then goes straight to pay the grandparents of those millennials (and anyone else eligible of that generation). The tax money paid this quarter goes directly to pay the monthly benefits of this quarter.

Social Security fits the definition of “Fiscal Policy”: Changing taxation and spending by the federal government

Leslie Kramer 2019 (financial journalist; 10+ years of experience writing financial and investment news ) last updated 8 May 2019 “What Is Fiscal Policy?” INVESTOPEDIA <https://www.investopedia.com/insights/what-is-fiscal-policy/>

[Fiscal policy](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/f/fiscalpolicy.asp) is the means by which a government adjusts its spending levels and [tax rates](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/t/taxrate.asp) to monitor and influence a nation's economy.

Monetary and Fiscal are 2 different policies

**Analysis: Like a car and a trailer, the fact that they can be used with each other doesn’t mean a car is a trailer nor that a trailer is a car.**

Leslie Kramer 2019 (financial journalist; 10+ years of experience writing financial and investment news ) last updated 8 May 2019 “What Is Fiscal Policy?” INVESTOPEDIA <https://www.investopedia.com/insights/what-is-fiscal-policy/>

[Fiscal policy](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/f/fiscalpolicy.asp) is the means by which a government adjusts its spending levels and [tax rates](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/t/taxrate.asp) to monitor and influence a nation's economy. It is the sister strategy to monetary policy through which a central bank influences a nation's money supply. These two policies are used in various combinations to direct a country's economic goals.

2. Insignificant reform

Link: CPI and PCEPI aren’t very much different

Wesley Janson, Ranal Verbrugge and Carola Binder 2020 (all are with the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland) . “The CPI–PCEPI Inflation Differential: Causes and Prospects” 2 March 2020 <https://www.clevelandfed.org/en/newsroom-and-events/publications/economic-commentary/2020-economic-commentaries/ec-202006-cpi-pcepi-inflation-differential.aspx>

Inflation rates measured by the CPI and PCEPI are generally similar; both track price changes in a basket of consumption goods and services, and the PCEPI makes use of much of the data from the CPI. But the indexes and their associated inflation rates are not identical. On average, since December 1978, 12-month CPI inflation has run 0.30 percentage points (ppts) above 12-month PCEPI inflation. However, this differential has been far from constant, and the series have diverged markedly at times. For instance, in the last quarter of 1981, CPI inflation ran about a full percentage point above PCEPI inflation, while during most of 2009 it ran an average of 0.35 ppts below PCEPI inflation (see figure 1).

Violation: Resolution requires substantial reform

Insignificant reforms aren’t worth 2 hours of our time to debate, and that’s why the Resolution rules out such cases. It’s also to protect Negatives from abusive cases, like raising bank fees by 1 cent, since that would create an infinite supply of cases we could never research.

Impact: No Affirmative team.

No one showed up to affirm substantial reform, so there’s no Affirmative team in the room. No matter who wins, you should write Negative on the ballot.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. Not raising the federal deficit

Social Security cannot increase the federal deficit. Impossible, based on the way it’s designed.

Mark Miller 2018 (journalist) 1 Nov 2018 “Social Security and the U.S. deficit: Separating fact from fiction” <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-column-miller-socialsecurity/social-security-and-the-u-s-deficit-separating-fact-from-fiction-idUSKCN1N64GR>

But it is quite a stretch to argue that Social Security drives deficits. By law, Social Security cannot contribute to the federal deficit, because it is required to pay benefits only from its trust funds. Those, in turn, are funded through a dedicated payroll tax of 12.4 percent of income, split evenly between employees and employers, levied on income (this year) up to $128,400. The program’s revenue and expenses are accounted for through two federal trust funds that have operated with large and growing surpluses in recent years, and they finished fiscal 2018 with an estimated $2.89 trillion. By law, Social Security must invest these surplus funds only in special-issue U.S. Treasury notes, which have the same full faith and credit guarantee as any other federal bond.

2. “Insolvency” of Social Security isn’t a problem

“Insolvency” doesn’t mean “no money,” it means taxes will cover 78% of benefits. Even worse case, that’s not a problem

Jim Luke 2015 (teaches economics at Lansing Community College in Michigan) 28 Mar 2015 “Why SS Is Not “Broke” And How The Trust Fund Works“ <https://econproph.com/2015/03/28/why-ss-is-not-broke-and-how-the-trust-fund-works/>

The projected “insolvency” means that, assuming all the projections actually come true (a tricky business by itself), Social Security will find itself in 2033 with payroll taxes only being enough to pay for *78% of the benefits we currently project/promise we will pay in 2033.* Even if we do nothing AND all the projections come true exactly as predicted, Social Security will continue paying 78% of the benefit that we are currently promising to people who will retire in 2033. People should keep in mind that the average benefits we are currently promising for retirees in 2033 are substantially larger in real terms than the benefits today’s average new retiree is receiving. So even if we do reach the “insolvency” point, Social Security will continue to pay benefits at a very substantial level when compared to today’s benefits. The future benefit, in real terms, would be greater than 78% of today’s average real benefit.

INHERENCY

1. Already used in banking/finance/monetary policy

PCEPI is the standard for the Federal Reserve already

Daniel Liberto 2019 (master’s degree in journalism) 8 Oct 2019 “Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE)” INVESTOPEDIA <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/p/pce.asp>

The PCE Price Index is the primary inflation index used by the U.S. Federal Reserve when making monetary policy decisions. It is comparable to the [Consumer Price Index](https://www.investopedia.com/articles/04/102004.asp) (CPI), which also focuses on consumer prices. Other measures of inflation also tracked by economists can include the Producer Price Index and the GDP Price Index.

SOLVENCY

1. Less accurate: Inaccurate numbers

PCEPI involves a lot of guesswork (or “judgmental” numbers) compared to CPI

Wesley Janson, Ranal Verbrugge and Carola Binder 2020 (all are with the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland) . “The CPI–PCEPI Inflation Differential: Causes and Prospects” 2 March 2020 <https://www.clevelandfed.org/en/newsroom-and-events/publications/economic-commentary/2020-economic-commentaries/ec-202006-cpi-pcepi-inflation-differential.aspx>

All told, about 25 percent of PCE spending is not captured by the CPI. It is worth noting that this broader scope comes with some disadvantages from a measurement perspective. The estimation of unobserved prices or costs can be quite challenging. And as Clark (2001) notes, because spending data for many items are available only on an annual basis, the BEA uses judgmental trends to estimate roughly 20 percent of the PCEPI at a monthly frequency.

2. Not applicable

PCEPI measures a lot of things that don’t apply to Social Security retirees (like government spending and schools)

Wesley Janson, Ranal Verbrugge and Carola Binder 2020 (all are with the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland) . “The CPI–PCEPI Inflation Differential: Causes and Prospects” 2 March 2020 <https://www.clevelandfed.org/en/newsroom-and-events/publications/economic-commentary/2020-economic-commentaries/ec-202006-cpi-pcepi-inflation-differential.aspx>

The CPI and PCEPI differ in coverage or scope; that is, the lists of items in the respective baskets differ. This difference in scope reflects different intended purposes, as there are conceptual differences between the two indexes. The CPI is designed to measure inflation in out-of-pocket spending by urban households, and thus its basket is representative of the goods and services that are purchased by urban consumers. In contrast, the PCEPI is designed to measure growth in the cost of the entirety of personal consumption expenditures in the national income and product accounts (NIPA). Thus, its scope is broader. In addition to the growth of prices related to out-of-pocket spending, the PCEPI must also account for growth in prices or costs of all goods and services purchased by entities such as governments, firms, or nonprofit institutions on behalf of the household sector. For instance, total spending on medical care includes both direct purchases of medical goods and services by consumers, as well as the spending on medical goods and services on behalf of households by Medicare or employer-provided health insurance companies. As another example, public schools provide education that is not paid for out-of-pocket. And the PCEPI also includes such things as the imputed costs of financial services that do not involve out-of-pocket spending.

3. Retroactive Changes

PCEPI often goes back in history and gets retroactively changed. That’s why CPI is used for government payments: You can’t take back money from someone’s Social Security check 3 years ago if PCEPI is updated now

Wesley Janson, Ranal Verbrugge and Carola Binder 2020 (all are with the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland) . “The CPI–PCEPI Inflation Differential: Causes and Prospects” 2 March 2020 <https://www.clevelandfed.org/en/newsroom-and-events/publications/economic-commentary/2020-economic-commentaries/ec-202006-cpi-pcepi-inflation-differential.aspx> (brackets added)

The nonseasonally adjusted CPI is almost never revised, so the seasonally adjusted CPI is essentially revised only to update seasonal adjustment factors; methodological improvements affect current and future values of the index, but are not applied to historical data.This feature of CPI data facilitates their use for indexing wages and government benefits, for indexing income tax brackets, and so on. In contrast, the BEA [Bureau of Economic Analysis] does not even produce a nonseasonally adjusted PCEPI and revises the PCEPI frequently and routinely. The initial PCEPI estimate is updated twice to reflect more complete data, and each year the PCEPI data for the previous three years are subject to revisions.

4. More study needed

We need a lot more study before we change the inflation index for transfer payments, or else millions of poor could be adversely affected

Tracey Gronniger 2019 (Directing Attorney, Justice in Aging) 21 June 2019 letter to Nancy Potok, Chief Statistician, Office of Management & Budget <https://www.justiceinaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final-JIA-Comments-on-FPL-proposal-by-OMB.pdf>

We are extremely concerned that OMB’s proposed changes could undercount millions of low- and middle-income older Americans and their families struggling to meet their basic needs. However, OMB has not engaged in any discussion or research on the adequacy of the current poverty line or the implications of changing it for the people who access programs that use a derivative of the poverty line to determine eligibility. The inflation measure is just one component of the poverty line calculation—it should not be viewed in isolation. The Official Poverty Measure is already thought by many to be incomplete and outdated. The U.S. Census Bureau has discussed some of these inadequacies as part of its production of the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM). Since it was first set during the Johnson Administration the Official Poverty Measure has been increased for inflation, but there have been no serious revisions based on the spending patterns of today’s households. These issues need to be thoroughly discussed and addressed before making a single change to the inflation measure that would most likely severely undercount the number of people in poverty. We have seen from the SPM that seniors are one of the groups more likely to be undercounted under the Official Poverty Measure, with over 2.5 million more seniors categorized as being in poverty under the SPM (7.2 million versus 4.7 million).

DISADVANTAGES

1. Increased poverty

Switching from CPI to PCEPI would increase poverty

Tracey Gronniger 2019 (Directing Attorney, Justice in Aging) 21 June 2019 letter to Nancy Potok, Chief Statistician, Office of Management & Budget <https://www.justiceinaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final-JIA-Comments-on-FPL-proposal-by-OMB.pdf>

OMB currently uses the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) to measure inflation for the purpose of updating the federal poverty line each year. OMB seeks comments regarding the use of the chained Consumer Price Index (chained CPI) or the Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index (PCEPI) for the production of official statistics. We strongly oppose the use of either of these measures. Both of these measures rise more slowly than the CPI-U. As a result, over time the poverty line resulting from the use of the chained CPI or the PCEPI would be significantly lower than if the poverty line were to be calculated using the CPI-U. While the effect would be even greater with the PCEPI than the chained CPI, both consumer price indexes would cause the number of people, including seniors, who were counted as poor or near poor to be lower than the number counted under a calculation based on the CPI-U.

2. Medical care denied

Link: Reducing the inflation adjustment means hundreds of thousands face higher prescription drug prices and loss of access to medication

Tracey Gronniger 2019 (Directing Attorney, Justice in Aging) 21 June 2019 letter to Nancy Potok, Chief Statistician, Office of Management & Budget <https://www.justiceinaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final-JIA-Comments-on-FPL-proposal-by-OMB.pdf>

If the poverty measure’s annual inflation adjustment is reduced, by the tenth year it is estimated that more than 250,000 people on Medicare would lose their eligibility for or get less help from prescription drug low-income subsidies, meaning their prescription drug costs would increase substantially. Moreover, over 150,000 low-income seniors and people with disabilities would lose help paying for Medicare Part B premiums, meaning they would have to pay over a thousand dollars per year to maintain physician coverage.2 Those with the lowest incomes would also lose help paying for Part A and Part B deductibles and cost-sharing. Justice in Aging serves older adults struggling to meet their basic needs and the loss of this assistance could easily mean the difference between critical medications and going without to meet other equally critical needs.

Link: Changing the inflation measurement would drop people from Medicaid, resulting in lost health insurance

Tracey Gronniger 2019 (Directing Attorney, Justice in Aging) 21 June 2019 letter to Nancy Potok, Chief Statistician, Office of Management & Budget <https://www.justiceinaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final-JIA-Comments-on-FPL-proposal-by-OMB.pdf>

Smaller annual adjustments to the federal poverty line means that Medicaid income eligibility limits— the maximum amount a family can earn to be eligible for Medicaid benefits—will be lower than they otherwise would be in any given year, and they will continue to decrease over time. The Administration is effectively proposing an automatic cut to eligibility, which will adversely affect the health and welfare of low-income seniors and people with disabilities by making them ineligible for critical Medicaid services upon which they rely.3 Medicaid expansion, which was adopted by thirty-seven states and the District of Columbia, resulted in increased health care coverage for millions of adults, including older adults age 50+ not yet eligible for Medicare, whose incomes fall below the current income-eligibility cutoffs. OMB’s proposal will shrink the inflation adjustment for the poverty measure, thereby undoing some of this progress and leading to fewer adults being insured. This proposed change could affect hundreds of thousands of people by causing them to lose critical Medicaid coverage.

Impact: Early death

Corinne Lewis 2019 (master’s degree in social policy; senior research associate in The Commonwealth Fund’s Delivery System Reform Program ) quoted by Shanoor Seervai 19 Apr 2019 “It’s Harder for People Living in Poverty to Get Health Care” <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/podcast/2019/apr/its-harder-people-living-poverty-get-health-care>

We were really interested in looking at low-income people, because there are huge health disparities in this country by income. So, there’s research by Raj Chetty, an economist, that shows that the top 1 percent of Americans, at this point, are expected to live 10 to 15 years longer than the bottom 1 percent of Americans. And what’s really, really shocking about this problem is that low-income people are much more likely to have health problems. But they also are much more likely to have poor access and poor quality of care.

Impact: Without health insurance: Poorer health and shorter lives

Dr. Steffie Woolhandler and Dr. David Himmelstein 2017 (both are M.D.) 19 Sept 2017 “The Relationship of Health Insurance and Mortality: Is Lack of Insurance Deadly?” ANNALS OF INTERNAL MEDICINE <https://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2635326/relationship-health-insurance-mortality-lack-insurance-deadly>

A landmark 2002 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report on the effects of insurance coverage on the health status of nonelderly adults buttressed this assumption (2). The IOM committee responsible for the report found consistent evidence from 130 (mostly observational) studies that “the uninsured have poorer health and shortened lives” and that gaining coverage would decrease their all-cause mortality (2). The IOM committee also reviewed evidence on the effects of health insurance in specific circumstances and medical conditions. It concluded that uninsured patients, even when acutely ill or seriously injured, cannot always obtain needed care and that coverage improves the uptake of essential preventive services and chronic disease management. The report found that uninsured patients with cancer presented with more advanced disease and experienced worse outcomes, including mortality; that uninsured patients with diabetes, cardiovascular disease, end-stage renal disease, HIV infection, and mental illness (the 5 other conditions reviewed in depth) had worse outcomes than did insured patients; and that uninsured inpatients received less and worse-quality care and had higher mortality both during their hospital stays and after discharge.