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Too often, doctors get it wrong because what they know is incomplete or out of date, and they often don't have electronic decision support tools to help sort out unusual conditions.

How we pay for care may encourage physicians to stay current, but getting this right is complex. Do we really expect to reward doctors based on how often they diagnose rare leukemias in children?

Knowledge, judgment and information technology do matter. These are more effectively measured using examinations and surveys of physicians' peers and practice infrastructure.

Certifying boards routinely use these tools to evaluate doctors. To better assure that they measure and reward the things that matter, payforperformance programs need to include tools like these as well.

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