

How Can I Learn More and Get Involved?

Useful Websites

The Coalition for Wisconsin Health; www.wisconsinhealth.org

Physicians for National Health Program; www.pnhp.org

American Medical Student Association; www.amsa.org

Families U.S.A.; www.familiesusa.org

Everybody In, Nobody Out; www.everybodyinnobodyout.org

Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada; www.healthcarecommission.ca

National Union of Public & General Employees (Canada); www.nupge.ca

Information about Wisconsin Badger Care & Medicaid (Click Mark Moody, WI Div. of Health Care Financing); www.pophealth.wisc.edu/wphi/education/conference/glance.htm

Kaiser Family Foundation; www.kaisernetwork.org

AFL-CIO Health Care Proposal; www.wisafcio.org/features/Health%20Care%20Proposal%202002.htm

American Journal of Public Health, January 2003 issue; www.ajph.org/content/vol93/issue1/#INTERNATIONAL_PERSPECTIVES_FORUM

Contact Your Legislators

To contact your federal legislators about the need for universal health care coverage, call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121.

WNPJ Organizations Working on Health Care Issues:

Clean Power Wisconsin, Marilyn Wilson, 2639 Mason, Madison, WI 53705; phone: 608-231-2277; email: cpw@sbcglobal.net

Coalition for Wisconsin Health, Art Taggart & Estelle Katz, PO Box 1453, Madison, WI 53701; phone: 608-663-8322; email: ataggart@facstaff.wisc.edu; web: www.wisconsinhealth.org

Gray Panthers of Wisconsin, Peggy Baime, 614 Dickenson, Madison, WI 53703; phone: 608-255-6096; email: cjbaime@powercom.net

Health Writers, Lea Zeldin, 5705 Forsythia Place, Madison, WI 53705; phone: 608-238-5740; email: lz14@juno.com

The Madison Institute, Gene and Linda Farley, 2299 Springrose Rd. Verona, WI 53593; phone: 608-845-8724; email: lfarley@fammed.wisc.edu; web: www.themadisoninstitute.org

Physicians for Social Responsibility, Alfred Meyer, PO Box 1712, Madison, WI 53701; phone: 608-232-9945; email: mail@psrmadison.org; web: www.psrmadison.org

SEIU District 1199/United Professionals for Health Care, Dian Palmer; phone: 608-277-1199; email: DianP@1199WUP.org; web: www.seiu1199wi.org

Wisconsin Citizen Action Health Care Task Force, Darcy Haber; phone: 608-256-1250; email: info@wi-citizenaction.org; web: www.wi-citizenaction.org



About the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice (WNPJ)

The purpose of WNPJ is to facilitate activities, cooperation, and communication among Wisconsin organizations and individuals working toward the creation of a world free from violence and injustice.

The Corporate Accountability Task Group (CATG) was created to better focus, educate, and organize our shared work for economic justice. The CATG also offers community workshops and produces other resource materials including a 100 page packet on Corporate Accountability available for \$13 from the WNPJ office.

For information about:

- Joining WNPJ
- working with the CATG
- purchasing an annual Directory of WNPJ Organizations
- attending the Annual Assembly in October
- attending the Steering Committee meeting of organizational representatives in April

Contact WNPJ at:

WNPJ
122 State Street, #402
Madison, WI 53703
 Phone: 608-250-9240

Email: info@wnpj.org

Web: www.wnpj.org



How the Corporatization of Health Care Hurts Us All



Health Care is an essential safeguard of human life and dignity. And there is an obligation for Society to ensure that every person be able to realize this right.

—Cardinal Joseph Bernardin
 Personal Letter on Health Care October 1995



Brochure prepared by
WNPJ Corporate
Accountability Task
Group

Number 1 in a Series
 Revised 9/04

Question: What is the only major industrialized country that does not have health insurance for everyone?

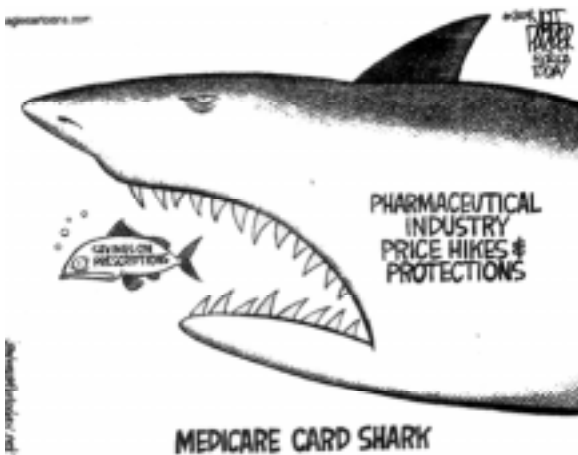
Answer: United States of America

Who Controls Our Health Care System?

For the past twenty years managed care has enjoyed the protection of the political and financial interests—the insurance companies, the pharmaceutical industry, large business, suppliers of hospital equipment, and members of Congress eager to keep this system in place. Meanwhile HMOs have gone calmly about the business of eliminating one treatment after another. The health care industry is sickened with this virus and is unlikely to recover until cured of its addiction to the profit motive. Unless the health care industry quits caring more for money instead of people the crisis can only grow.

—Ronald J. Glasser MD

The Doctor is Not In, Harpers Magazine, March 1998



Signs of the Health Care Crisis

- Managers for insurance companies are making decisions about health care that should be made by people who know and care about patients: their physicians, nurses and family members.
- 45 million people nationwide have no health insurance coverage—about 593,000 of them in Wisconsin. At least 50 million nationwide are under-insured and could be bankrupted by a major illness.
- 75% of people without health care coverage are members of working families.
- The number of uninsured increased by 1.4 million nationwide in 2003 alone—many of them children—as a result of the increasing number of people unemployed or employed in low-wage jobs without benefits.
- Over 1/2 of all personal bankruptcies are caused by medical care costs.
- Once again the total costs of health care are skyrocketing. Premiums show double-digit increases. More and more employers are putting the burden of payment on the employee.
- Doctors and nurses are forced to carry heavier patient loads, feeling unhappy because they cannot do the caring job they know is right. Both spend more time on the phone haggling with insurance companies and doing paperwork.
- People with health problems cannot get the care they need including mental health and substance abuse care. Preventive care goes by the wayside.
- Prescription drugs cost U.S. citizens 30–70% more for identical drugs than citizens of either Canada or Great Britain. Seniors are especially affected because they use one third of all prescription drugs.
- Per person costs for health care in the USA are the highest in the world. Costs in the U.S. per person were \$5600 in 2003 and are estimated to be over \$6000 for 2004. Comparable costs for 2003 are estimated to be \$2,600 in Germany and \$2,500 in Canada.

- Large for-profit corporations are taking over nonprofit health care organizations such as the recent conversion of Wisconsin's Blue Cross-Blue Shield to a for-profit company.
- Over 25 cents of every health care dollar is wasted on paperwork, television ads, billboards, multimillion-dollar CEO salaries and other things patients don't need or want.
- Administrative costs in the U.S. are 2–3 times higher than those of other industrialized nations.

How Can We Get Quality, Affordable Health Care For All?

One way would be for you and your organization to support House Concurrent Resolution 99 which directs Congress to enact legislation by October 2005 that provides access to comprehensive health care for all Americans. This Resolution is cosponsored by Representative Tammy Baldwin and 82 other Representatives.

Another way in Wisconsin would be to support and lobby for the Wisconsin Universal Health Plan. The bill is expected to be reintroduced in January 2005 and includes:

- One insurance plan covering all people in WI.
- Unrestricted choice of health care provider.
- Coverage for all standard medical services including alcohol and drug treatment, mental health, preventive and rehabilitative services, home and long term care, prescription drugs, medical supplies and dental care.
- Preventive care and early intervention.
- Minimal or no co-payments and no deductibles.
- Benefits remain in place, whether one moves, retires, becomes unemployed, seriously ill or injured. Coverage assured while you are a Wisconsin resident
- Local care providers make clinical decisions—not HMOs or the government.
- Locally administered clinics and hospitals on a not-for-profit basis.

How Could A National Health Program (NHP) Be Funded?

It would be funded in three ways:

1. Pooling all current health care funds such as those for Medicare and Medicaid.
2. Creating a new health care tax which would replace current health insurance premiums.
3. With the savings from eliminating huge profits and overhead by implementing a publicly accountable health care trust fund.

The bills introduced in Congress have contained a health care tax of 8.7% of payroll for employers and 2.2% of taxable income for individuals. These new taxes would actually result in 75% of Americans paying less for health care than they do now by paying insurance premiums and out of pocket expenses including prescription drugs.

The savings under a national health plan would be fourfold:

1. A single payer would replace the 1500 different plans currently in place. The administrative savings from eliminating bureaucratic duplication, marketing costs, and profits would have totaled \$100 billion for 1991 according to the General Accounting Office.
2. Eliminating itemized billing for each patient, item, and procedure would reduce overall health care costs by \$225 billion according to the Congressional Budget Office.
3. Workers Compensation costs would be reduced by the 40% that currently covers medical care which would instead be covered under a National Health Plan.
4. Less money would need to be added to the consumer price of products to cover the cost of health care for employees. For example, in 1991 it was estimated that \$700 of the cost of a car was for employee health care.