

Policy process (part 1)



Introduction There are too many holes in the health care system to narrow any one of them down. Each of them connect to one another and either benefit or leave someone out. Health care professionals have become somewhat of an advocacy on behalf of their patients to help influence changes in the current policies.

Doctors and nurses alike have to step out of their comfort zone of practicing medicine and step into policy and politics. When headed to Washington to change or add new policies it takes pure dedication, determination, time, and energy to keep going even when it seems bleak. This paper will discuss the formulation stage, legislative stage, and implementation stage of introducing or changing policies.

The main goal that everyone has to have better health care for everyone young, old, rich or poor. Formulation Stage The current health care system is inedited with polices, regulations, and laws set by the federal government, private agencies, insurance companies, and institutions. Access to health care at times is very difficult and accord to the United States Census Bureau data collected 254 million Americans were without health insurance in 2009 (English, 2010). That figure has more than triple in the last five years. These findings are very disappointing and only show the desperate need for health care reform in the U. S. today. Health care professionals are on the front lines each and every day giving them the edge to take action and bring about some serious changes that will benefit everyone and not compromise the quality of care for the patients.

There are many stages to turning an idea into a law and many steps must be taken in proper order (English, 2010). Policy and Process The policy process refers to all decisions and events that are required before a policy can be proposed. In short there are three phases of policy making: the formulation stage, implementation stage, and the evaluation stage. The formulation stage may possibly be the most important simply because the change has to start somewhere. The formulation stage involves key players doing research and ideas from people, organizations, and interest groups. When this process is complete the foundation will be laid. The purpose, direction, and outcomes are clearly explained. Recourses become identified and a plan is put into motion to obtain what is needed.

The implementation stage involves gathering all the information about the policy and putting it into action (Abood, 2007). Political Action The second stage of the policy process cycle is political action can be a single interest group or just one individual ready to make a change. There are many different ways this process can begin, for example a statement or letter can be written from a political leader. Political action can also start at a ??? roundtable??? discussion, a promise of investigations by law enforcement if changes do not happen, or informal meetings. There are also political promises when an official is trying to be elected or re-elected. It is amazing how certain changes that needed to happen long ago suddenly get pushed to the front of the line when election time is near (Petersen, 2009).

Legislative Proposal When impediments are imposed on legislation it forces Congress to respond and create bills to resolutions to a request for research by the Congressional Research Service. Issues are also referred to

congressional committees which are influenced by politics, seniority, and what seems to be priority at the time. It can be very difficult to move an issue through the whole legislative process and even though such as education process or health care reform, yet when it comes to policies such as national security those pass through Congress with hardly no word from the public. Education, Health Care Reform and of course National Security are all important but advocacy is very important and make the difference between a proposal being stuck in limbo and becoming a law (Petersen, 2009). Law and Regulation Only after a bill has passed through Congress and signed by the president does it become a law.

The start of the new law depends on how quickly it needs to be moved into action. However, there are many hurdles and details to get through first and in efforts to help this process there are many different divisions such as congressional affairs, regulatory affairs, and many other divisions each specializing in each field and having the ability to influence government (Petersen, 2009). The Connection Between Policy and Politics As any health care issue moves through phases of the policy process, from a proposal to an actual program that can be enacted, implemented, and evaluated. With having many different people in positions and areas of interest not everyone will see eye to eye on how things should be handled all though the political parties have the upper hand. It is very difficult working in the politic world, having to find different ways of representing each individual person and come up with policies and laws that best benefit everyone. The more difficult the policy or change, the more time and more difficult it will become to put the change into effect. Throughout each and every day of our lives especially

those of us working in the health care industry the government has a say so in just about everything. For some the government decides who gets what, how much and even when, it can be very difficult, but deep down as a nation the government is doing the best they can with the resources they have (Abood, 2007).

Compliance Once all sides have been heard, the policies are in place, and all regulations have been ironed out everyone must comply or face breaking the law. When a new law has taken effect, new regulations and offices must be put into place to ensure policies are being met to help fix the original problems (Petersen, 2009). Conclusion Whether they acknowledge it or not, everyone working in the health care industries are governed by policies, regulations, legislation, and rules which govern how they are to conduct business each and every day. Many special interest groups involved in health care actively participate in the development of health care policy by providing critical information legislators need to make decisions. Without someone taking interest in the constant changes needed in health care nothing would ever improve and the patients would be the ones to ultimately suffer the consequences. On the forefront of health care reform are the nurses themselves, they are the single most group of people working in the health care industry each day. Who better to advocate for health care reform, then those on the frontlines.

With their perspective on what truly needs to change in order for everyone to have adequate health care without having to cut corners nothing has to be left out. However without having a solid foundation and a good understanding of how policies and legislations their efforts could be wasted

in their ideas could be left sitting in a pile amongst all the other hundreds of bills that pass through Washington each year. There are many options available to get help to ensure the policy gets off to the right start.

Knowledge is power.

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