

United states vs japan – health care



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Healthcare differs all around the world. The main goal of healthcare, to treat people for illness and disease, is the same the delivery of healthcare varies from one country to another. Two countries that practice very different healthcare are the United States of America and Japan. There are many differences between the two countries including their structure, efficiency and medical challenges. The United States and Japan have two very different structures when it comes to healthcare. In Japan every person is required by law to have health insurance and this is made easy by having government regulated universal coverage.

In the United States current legislatures are being passed to require all citizens to have health insurance, however health insurance is offered through private parties. Japan's universal health insurance offers its people freedom of choice on who their physician is and premiums are based on income and ability to pay. (Fahs, 1993) The United States healthcare plans are mainly offered through employers and can have strict guidelines as to who your provider is and what costs they cover, by choosing a health care provider outside of the insurance plans network a person can expect to pay up to 100% of treatment. While insurance programs and fees are determined by the government in Japan physicians choose how they wish to administer care and hospitals are non-profit and run by doctors. The opposite is done in America and hospitals are owned and operated by private businesses that determine the fees and how doctors practice, this in turn leads to a high rate of defensive medicine and a lack of doctor/patient trust.

The efficiency of medicine and healthcare in both countries differs as well. Japan has the longest life expectancy of its citizens. Fees are low and remain

the same across the country in Japan, this is because the government regulates the fees once a year and keeps the best interest of its people in mind. Due to the well maintained costs of healthcare in Japan its citizens are not concerned about the government control. (Fahs, 1993) This is very opposite in the United States.

There are many organizations that fight against government control of healthcare and wish to keep things regulated by third parties and pharmaceutical companies, which keep costs high and profits higher. The citizens have a high distrust of health care in America and are ranked last in quality. Another component of healthcare is the challenges each country faces. There are weaknesses in each country's healthcare. For Japan a challenge is taking care of the elderly, due to Japan's high life expectancy they also have a higher rate of elderly that need care. Other challenges for Japan include poor emergency care and underpaid overworked medical staff.

In terms of money being spent on healthcare, Americans spend more per capita than any other country. The high amount of uninsured Americans also is a challenge. Due to a lack of insurance there are an additional 48,000 unnecessary deaths in the U.

S. each year. (Cecere, 2009) Japan and the United States have two different health care systems. The United States focuses its efforts on profit and Japan focuses on the people. While both health care systems have their benefits and challenges Japan provides an example of how healthcare can be beneficial to the citizens and create an environment of trust and understanding.

The United States stands to learn a lot from the healthcare model Japan has made. Works Cited <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/health-costs-how-the-us-compares-with-other-countries/> <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2009/09/new-study-finds-45000-deaths-annually-linked-to-lack-of-health-coverage/>