

# Essay on health care usa

Philosophy, Freedom



Will it be possible to rein in the costs of health care and still give the public the health care freedom-of-choice in health care providers?

Employers and the public have seen their health care cost increase dramatically in the last decade, and they are expected to continue to rise. (Hartman, Martin, Nuccio, Catlin,) The United States has one of the world's highest per capita spending rates for health care. (Pearson). Even with the great sums of money now directed towards health care, coverage is inconsistent and the cost of health care is still increasing. Physicians, hospitals and other providers have a different set of concerns. Managed health plans inhibit a physician's ability to apply immediate personalized health care on a case-by-case basis. Instead of spending time helping their patients they are processing forms and dealing with "red tape" to comply with the requirements and restrictions of a managed care health plan. While malpractice is a factor, it is not the financial cost of malpractice insurance and lawsuits so much as it is the stress on the individual health care providers. The greatest financial burden is seen in the form of unnecessary testing and medical procedures.

Another factor in the national rise in health care cost is the increasing percentage of elderly Americans. As people age they require more health care, and more preventative care to maintain a healthy quality of life. Longer life spans combined with the "Baby Boomer" generation joining the elderly population has increased this demographic exponentially. Although not a major factor in the rising health care costs in the United States, it is a factor. (Berhanub, Warner).

The obesity epidemic is also a factor in rising health care costs. Obesity is a

problem in itself. It also has its own panoply of associated diseases. However, the problem does not end there; it also exacerbates other conditions and complicates treatment and care for a wide variety of disorders.( Employer Health Benefits 2009 Annual Survey).

The rising cost of prescription medicine adds to the final cost of health care as well. Drug companies spend a lot of money to bring a medication to market. There is research and development, copy write and patent costs and years of testing needed to be sure the drug is safe and effective. Meanwhile, the patent clock is ticking. If a company cannot bring the drug to market before the patent runs out the potential profit on the drug drops dramatically. This is another area of concern that needs to be addressed.

No one wants to sacrifice health care, freedom-of-choice or choice in health care providers still; health care costs must be contained. Containing cost without sacrificing care something providers and patients have been trying to do for decades. Adding additional layers of paperwork and red tape is not going to help providers give less expensive, more effective health care.

However, establishing a basic level of health care, especially preventative health care is integral to the final solution. The solution starts with the individual; people need to take personal responsibility for their health. That includes diet, and exercise. Physicians need the flexibility to address potential problems when those problems arise and are most easily treated, without “ over treating” or recommending unnecessary treatment. Beyond that, a consistent layer of oversight needs to be established to encourage preventative care and to reduce excessive treatment. If that can be done, it will help rein in the costs of health care give the public the health care

freedom-of-choice in health care providers, without overly burdening physicians and other providers with the inhibiting regulations and excessive paperwork associated with managed health care.

## **Works Cited**

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