

### **American Nursing Association**

A staunch and active supporter of HR676. Speculation on why this is true is that nurses have suffered considerably as a profession under the current “managed care/HMO” system and because it is nurses who have had to accept clerical jobs in doctor’s offices doing nothing but overseeing the billing of individual insurance companies.

### **California Nursing Association**

The CNA has been very active in supporting the passage of a California law for universal payer as well as the HR676. In the videos we watched, they have a campaign on YouTube called “Real People DENIED Real Healthcare.” This campaign is designed to help the public understand their social problems claim that even though many have some health care coverage it isn’t enough to protect them from catastrophic or chronic illness.

### **Epidemiology**

The demographic study of the incidence of disease, usually done in order to monitor and prevent epidemics, but also used to understand environmental effects on health and well-being of persons. The World Health Organization is the largest epidemiological organizations in the world. Most governments at any level have some form of epidemiology in order to track the incidence of sickness in their jurisdictions.

### **HMOs/Managed Care**

In the early 1970s, the US government and insurance companies began developing a method of financial health care that involved the oversight of medical decisions by economic interests to help keep health care costs to a minimum. The public was told that this would ensure that doctors and other practitioners would not run unnecessary tests or use unsupported medical treatments. However, by the 1990s many of these organizations had grown into huge bureaucracies with every increasing demands for documentation and paperwork and a corporate culture that encouraged the denial of care. Supporters of this form of financing suggest that HMOs have provided more coverage and have encouraged prevention in medical care. Opponents suggest that HMOs have taken money from their subscribers without providing the promised financial support and have interfered with medical care and medical decision-making. The current debate on universal health care centers around whether these businesses will continue to be the major source of funding for health care. Proponents of the HR676 are essentially outlawing this form of for-profit oversight of health care. The passage of HR676 in its current form would mean the demise of these businesses, though there is a provision to hire from this industry in the US National Health Care Program to hire first from these businesses.

### **HR676**

A bill introduced in the US House of Representatives several times since 2005 and most recently in January 2009, that provides for the universal health care payment for all residents of the United States.

### **HR676 Social Problems Claim**

The claim behind the introduction of this bill is that the current problems the US health care system is experiencing can be traced to the rise and prevalence of HMOs and multiple sources of medical financing. The claim is that both quantity of coverage and quality of care have been hurt by the current system and that the single-payer financing (the US government being the only funding source for almost all medical procedures) would provide for an improvement in the number of persons having access to health care and the quality of that care. This system is closer to the Canadian system (where doctors, hospitals, other medical services and pharmaceuticals are privately owned) than the British system (where most medical professionals are employees of the government and most medical facilities are owned by the government).

### **Latent Function of American Medicine**

Since most access to health care is obtained via one's employer, health care in the US has had the latent function of retaining employees under less than acceptable working conditions. Workers have to consider their loss of health care when deciding whether to quit a job or not. In addition, the current system has had the latent function of creating, maintaining and sustaining the HMO and pharmaceutical industries as these two industries are in control of access and quality of care in American Medicine and often act in their own best interests rather than those interests of the patients.

### **Life Expectancy**

A calculation of the expected number of years a person will live from a specific age. Usually when used as a health indicator it refers to the expected life from birth of all persons born in the current year. It is a demographic measurement based upon the demographics of age-specific deaths in a given population. While used as an indicator of future events, it is not a true statistical predictor.

### **Manifest Function of American Medicine**

The manifest function of American Medicine is to provide health care to persons who need it and to create a healthy and productive citizenry.

### **Michael Moore**

An American documentarian who directed and produced the film, *SICKO*, which criticizes the American Health Care system and specifically HMOs/Managed Care and Pharmaceutical companies. He is one of the major leaders in the movement to support HR676 and a universal payer health care system in the United States.

### **Talcott Parsons**

A mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, American sociologist who wrote extensively regarding social systems and how they work and shape our thinking and action. Generally regarded as the leading functionalist, most of Parsons work has been rejected in contemporary sociological study, however, his ideas remain influential with some pieces of it having considerable merit.

### **Pharmaceutical-Industrial Complex**

Playing off Eisenhower's military-industrial complex, critics of the American health care system have noted a great economic incentive for pharmaceutical companies to treat rather than cure disease and to create new labels for symptoms that essentially create new diseases or syndromes. The economic incentive is the monopolistic advantage given a company with a patent. Since patents for drugs in the US are granted on the basis of the conditions that are treated by the drug, pharmaceutical companies have a large incentive to first only list a single disease or condition on the original patent and then to "discover" new uses for the drugs when the patents are just about ready to expire.

### **Linda Pino (Peeno) MD**

A physician featured in Michael Moore's documentary, *SICKO*, who has publically admitted to denying coverage on behalf of Humana to the detriment of the patient and the economic advantage of the company. For the past 10 years, she has been an activist calling for reform and now supporting HR676. Her position in the industry as well as her credential as an MD makes her a credible spokesperson in the HR676 social problems claim.

### **Professional Ethic**

The central goal of a profession that members share and are socialized to believe is the best way to perform their work as a professional.

### **Sick Role**

Talcott Parsons outlined the role played by sick people which allows persons experiencing illness lead-way in meeting their social obligations as long as a health care professional identified the illness and the person playing the sick role makes what is perceived to be a sincere effort to follow medical directions and get well.

### **Single-Payer Health Care System**

A system of health care financing that makes all coverage come from a single source, usually a government entity. This is opposed to consumers purchasing health care coverage (or in the case of the US their employers purchasing health care coverage) from competing health care funders (such as HMOs, insurance companies, private health funds, etc.). This is the system that is prevalent in Europe and Canada.

### **“Socialized” or Government Owned Health Care System**

Universal health care in some European and other countries has involved state-owned medical facilities with medical personnel (including physicians) being employees of the government. This is NOT what is being proposed in the United States by any advocate of note. This kind of health care has been nicknamed “socialized” medicine because of state ownership of medical facilities. More generally any kind of government involvement in medical care delivery or funding is sometimes labeled “socialized medicine.” However, the term “socialized” is generally regarded as a red herring meant to convince the public that having government involvement in medicine could lead to communism. The truth is that through Medicare, Medicaid and public health organizations like local health authorities, the Center for Disease Control and the US Public Health Organization, the United States government has a long history of involvement in health care, most of which is not disputed or called “socialized” by those who oppose single-payer health care plans.

### **Whistle-Blower**

A person within an organization (in-group) who reports a problem with the organization to outsiders (out group) in an effort to affect reform. This person usually faces stiff and life-changing sanctions including the inability to remain employed, to get employment in their field and threats to their families and physical well-being.