

Paying the Price for Health Care Reform

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With health care reform looming on everyone's minds, deciphering all of the information available is almost impossible. Trying to read the Health Care Reform bill is like looking at the ink blot test, everyone interprets it differently. There is one thing that is for sure though and that is that seniors are suffering as a result.

The Fiscal 2010 Budget (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fy2010_key_healthcare/) shows that \$630 billion will be set aside over a ten year period and will be dedicated to financing reforms to our health care system. According to this budget "\$630 billion is not sufficient to fully fund comprehensive reform. But this is a first crucial step in that effort," and to raise the majority of this money, which will not be sufficient, it is proposed that money be taken out of Medicare and Medicaid.

As a result of Medicare losing money, Advantage plans prices are raising. These Advantage plans are for those with low income on Medicare, who are unable to afford the alternative of a prescription plan and a supplement to cover their medical needs. If prices rise on the plans, the low income seniors who currently rely on Advantage plans, will be unable to afford them. Making the necessity of these plans obsolete. There are those currently on Advantage plans suffering because of these upcoming changes, paying more than they can afford for the lowest costing plan available to them. The cost of plans that many seniors are on are raising \$100 or more per month. When the seniors can no longer pay for a plan, their only choice will be to go without a health plan. They will be unable to get the care they will need if they become ill.

At what cost are we willing to pay in order to change our health care system? There are many articles out there that tell about countries, such as Canada and France, that have National Health Care, and are not happy with it, yet we are risking lives to change to it. As of today, no health care system is able to help everyone. It's time to rethink changing our health care system completely. What we need to start asking is what can realistically be done to change our health care system without harming our citizens?