

The Public Ought To Know

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By Corey Bearak

A single payer plan for NYS might just drive what we need for our nation. Part 3

Research on national health care found that medical tax deductions and other federal health spending could fund universal health care; that premise continues to hold true today.

Health insurance costs leave many New Yorkers who work for small businesses or part time or who otherwise lack benefits without access to regular care. Look at the costs of care on a health insurance statement, how much the insurer allows the care

to cost and the reimbursement. You can quickly calculate how a working- or middle-class person – or worse, a family – without adequate insurance, faces financial ruin from a long-term illness. Canadians have long enjoyed the benefits of their universal care system. Canadians face no worries about paying for coverage no matter how long the care takes; this includes following up home care. Of course they receive universal medical coverage without paying premiums.

Think of the other benefits. Universal care alleviates the concerns of families when elderly parents face heart issues or the onset of Alzheimer's disease. No need to worry about affording medical care.

An Institute of Health's (January 2004) report offered five guiding principles in evaluating strategies to address health care needs. It recommended: universal health care coverage; care should be continuous care; care should be affordable to individuals and families; care should be affordable and sustainable for society; and care should enhance health and well-being by promoting access to effective, efficient, safe, timely, patient-centered and equitable high-quality care. (See <http://tiny.cc/zv7mrx>). In finding all the principles necessary, "the first is the most basic and important." And clearly the New York Health Bill meets these standards. Its sponsors deserve our commendation. The committee, the Assembly and Senate ought to move its passage at the legislature reconvenes and the Governor must get behind this landmark legislation.

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