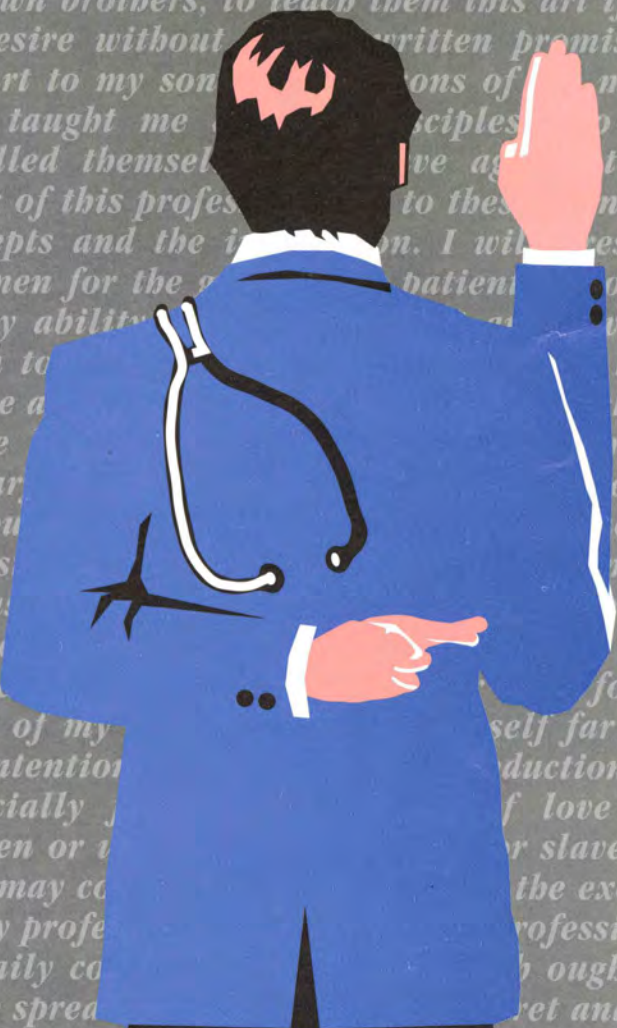


# WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH IN AMERICA?



## IT'S BEING BURIED.

## THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE IS AT RISK FOR EVERYONE.

Medicine is changing from a profession into a business as medical care is being taken over by managed-care companies such as Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs).

Profits in HMOs come from enrolling patients, not from spending money on them. Only the healthiest prospects are signed up for membership while those with pre-existing conditions are excluded. The last vestiges of compassion and professionalism are being squeezed out.

HMOs offer doctors high financial incentives to minimize care and delist them if they don't cooperate. Those who refuse to knuckle under to insurers' quality-threatening rules face the ruination of their practices. "Gag" clauses forbid any criticism of the plan or disclosure of information that might shake public confidence. Meanwhile, the CEOs of the companies take home millions of dollars every year.

An estimated 50 million Americans are forced to choose, sometimes every year, from a limited pool of doctors when employers negotiate new contracts with different HMOs. *People are seen as commodities with which to make profits. Trusting relationships between doctors and patients fall by the wayside.*

Forty million Americans lack any health care coverage at all.

Another sixty million can't afford adequate coverage.

The quality of health care is going down for everyone.

**A** 32 year old new mother who had abdominal pain and rectal bleeding went to a primary-care doctor chosen because his group was near her new home. Three months later, her pain and bleeding remained with no explanation. After demanding action, she got a \$261 barium enema X-ray which proved inconclusive. Three more months of office visits used up the rest of the year's payments under the contract, which had been negotiated by the employer, and the clinic would have had to pay the next \$5,000 in charges. The patient died of undiagnosed colon cancer 20 months later. The court found the doctor negligent for putting off a \$450 sigmoidoscopy and a referral to a gastroenterologist.

What happened to this woman should not happen to anyone in America. We must stop it now!

*"In every house where I come I will enter only for the good of my patients, keeping myself far from all intentional ill-doing and all seduction... I will prescribe regimen for the good of my patients according to my ability and my judgement and never do harm to anyone..."*

—THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH

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“Gatekeeper” doctors can call in specialists only as a very last resort. Hospitals are replacing thousands of nurses with untrained personnel. The number of administrators and clerks is growing enormously.

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Polls show that  
most Americans are  
aware of our health care  
problems and favor a change  
to a national health plan  
with universal coverage.

Many doctors favor one also.

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Universal health care coverage has been endorsed by *Physicians for National Health Program*, *The American College of Surgeons*, *The National Medical Association* and *The American Medical Womens Association*. Most industrialized countries have had such plans for many years. We must develop a plan to meet our **American** needs and standards.

## WHY UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE IS THE ANSWER.

- **ALL** Americans would receive comprehensive, high quality medical care based on need, not ability to pay.
- Everyone would be treated **fairly**.
- All medically necessary services would be **covered**: preventive, acute, chronic, long-term, mental, home care, prescription drugs, medical supplies and public health measures.
- Everyone would be **free to choose** any doctor and hospital.
- The health delivery system would remain **private** - only the financing and administration would change.
- National health insurance, paid for with taxes **instead** of insurance premiums, would provide funds for one entity, a "**single-payer**," to pay all medical expenses. The plan would be carried out by state or regional boards.
- Health care would **cost less**. Most savings would come from the elimination of the bureaucracy, red-tape, overhead and profits of the insurance companies which now cost the U.S. hundreds of billions of dollars a year. Doctors and hospitals would not need such large administrative staffs because they would no longer deal with 1,500 insurance companies and innumerable government programs.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO

Obtain more information from :

## **Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP)**

332 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60604  
(312) 554-0382 • Fax (312) 554-0383  
or e-mail at [pnhp@aol.com](mailto:pnhp@aol.com)

Pass it on to your doctors, legislators and associates.

Contribute to organized single-payer  
groups and activities.

Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper.

Join in on radio and TV talk shows.

Spread the word through Internet - PNHP has  
a web page at <http://www.pnhp.org>

## **Do something now.**

*"...Healing is a matter of time,  
but it is sometimes also  
a matter of opportunity."*

*-HIPPOCRATES*

