

Subject: News from Advocacy for Patients with Chronic Illness, Inc.

From: "Advocacy for Patients with Chronic Illness, Inc." <patient_advocate@sbcglobal.net>

Date: Fri, 21 Aug 2009 09:00:15 -0400 (EDT)

To: kenaukett@uoaa.org

Handbook cover

Special Mid-Month Edition

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Advocacy for Patients with Chronic Illness

We provide FREE information, advice and advocacy services to patients with chronic illnesses in areas including health and disability insurance, Social Security disability, employment discrimination, Family & Medical Leave Act, school-based discrimination, and resource location.

Need help? Call (860) 674-1370 or [email us](#).

Advocacy for Patients Needs Your Help!

To keep providing these services for FREE, we need your help.

We are publishing a special mid-month edition of our e-newsletter because of two urgent issues that require your help and attention.

First, health care reform. The myths are rampant. But I've read the legislative drafts. Death panels? FALSE. Government rationing of health care? FALSE. Coverage of illegal immigrants? FALSE. Cutting Medicare in ways that will harm the elderly? FALSE. It's all lies.

If you want more information debunking these myths, go to the White House [Reality Check](#) website, or to [FactCheck.org](#). You can also continue to keep an eye on my blog.

But what I want to say to you today about health care reform is a little different, so read on.

Second, we need your help. I'm sad to say that one of our major funders is suffering from the ailing economy to the extent that they have had to cancel our contract with them. This leaves us short. We are committed to continuing to provide FREE services to patients in need, but we really need your help. No joke, folks. Many of you received services from us and did not make a tax deductible charitable donation. Maybe you were in the midst of a crisis. Maybe you didn't have even \$10 to spare. We understand that; that's why we never charge for our services.

But if by any chance you are doing a little better today, or if you are feeling less stressed, a tax deductible donation right now would make a huge difference in ensuring that we will be here the next time you need our help. You can give through PayPal using the Donate button on the left.

Thank you for your support.



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THANK YOU!

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Do Unto Others

Taped to the frame of my computer monitor is a quotation that helps me every day to remember why I am working so hard for the rights of people with chronic illnesses: "Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane." Martin Luther King, Jr.

This, from a man who knew inequality and injustice when he saw it.

I watch the debates over health insurance reform and wonder. Why is it that we have to pitch its advantages to the people who already have insurance because otherwise, they will oppose reform to help the uninsured? Why is it that seniors are lining up in opposition to reform because they are afraid that -- although the draft legislation does not include cuts to Medicare -- they will lose out? Why is it that President Obama was critiqued for telling faith-based groups this week that health care reform is our moral responsibility?

When Social Security was passed, and then Medicare, they received strong bipartisan support. There was a need. We as a country did not want the elderly and disabled to be without income and health care. We would all make the sacrifice, we decided as a nation. And we do the same for veterans, whether they saw combat or not. Indeed, we provide free health care for all prisoners, regardless of what they did to land themselves in a federal penitentiary.

So why isn't it enough to say health insurance reform simply is the right thing to do? There are 46 million people in the United States with no health care. Some of them choose not to buy insurance -- they are young and healthy, and not thinking about the what ifs that we who are older and wiser know will become a reality for many of them, especially if you consider that half of all Americans have a chronic health condition. But many of them either cannot afford insurance or they have pre-existing conditions that make it impossible to find insurance. Why is it okay to leave them to fend for themselves?

Is this the kind of country we want to be -- one that is inhabited by people who make their decisions about what policies and programs are important based solely on what is best for them and them alone?

The person in agony, turned away by insurers because of

a pre-existing condition, given pain meds and shown the door by the hospital emergency room, left with nowhere to go, nobody to help them -- I talk to people like these every day. There are no solutions for them. They have been left to fend for themselves, and they cannot. They are living on the street, in their car, in shelters where they can't sleep for fear of their few meager possessions being stolen by others. No medicine, no doctors, no family, no friends, no support.

There but for the grace of whomever/whatever go we all. If you think it can't happen to you, think again. All it takes is one catastrophic bout of illness and you lose your job, your health insurance, your home -- it is happening to people every single day. You could be one of the unlucky ones tomorrow, no matter what your status is today.

But I don't want to have to sell health insurance reform to you by appealing to your self-interest. I want you to think about what America means, who Americans are. I want all of us to recognize that, "of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane." And it must stop. Now.

If you care about equality, dignity, community, respect, you must be in favor of health insurance reform.

Jennifer C. Jaff, Esq.
Executive Director
Advocacy for Patients with Chronic Illness, Inc.

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