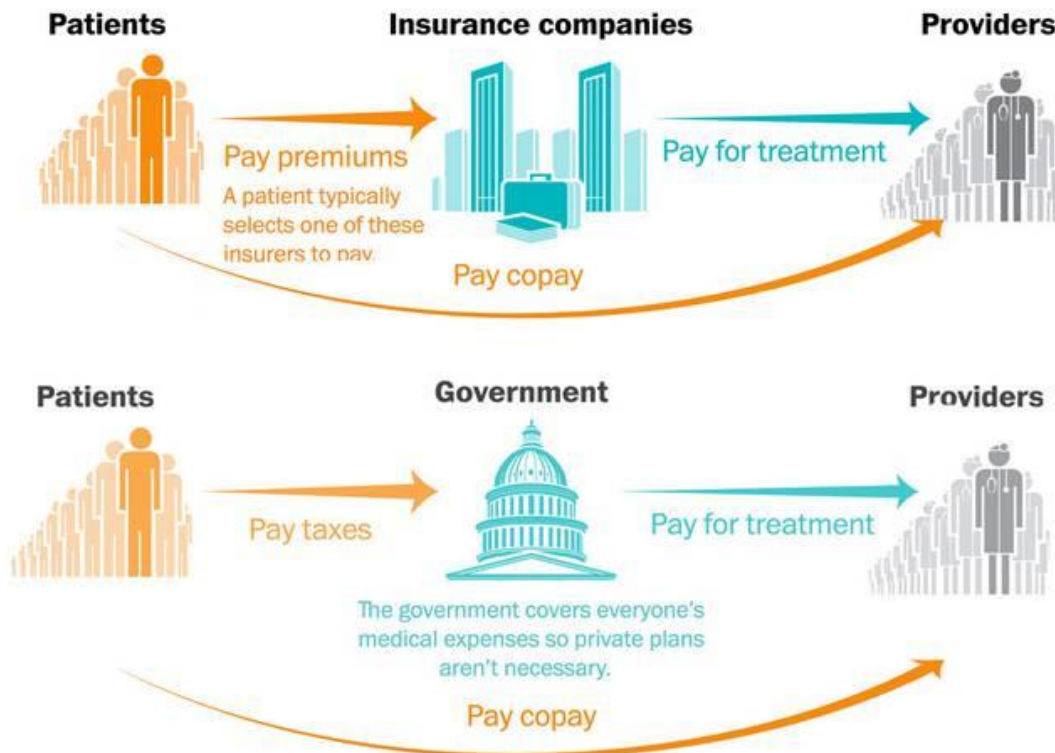




21ST CENTURY DEBATE

A DEEPER LEARNING APPROACH TO DEBATE EDUCATION

[NSDA Topic] September/October 2022: U.S. Healthcare



Single-payer would drastically change American health care; here's how it works (Washington Post, 2017-10-18)

BACKGROUND:

Medicare for All is a proposed new healthcare system for the United States where instead of people getting health insurance from an insurance company, often provided through their workplace, everyone in America would be on a program provided through the federal government. It has become a favorite of progressives...

- [Medicare for All: Definition and Pros and Cons \(Smart Asset, April 6, 2022\)](#)

...with so many conflicting proposals on how to achieve affordable and quality healthcare, it can become difficult for voters to make sense of the conflicting information. **Supporters argue...** that Medicare for All will be the most effective way to ensure that every American has health insurance and that the single-payer system will drive efficiencies in service. **Opponents argue...** that Medicare for All reduces the quality of healthcare with a significant burden on taxpayers. - [Should the U.S. have Medicare for All? \(The Thread, March 17, 2020\)](#)

...One idea championed by many on the progressive left is "Medicare for All," or a single-payer system, which would do away with private health insurance for most forms of care. **Advocates promise...** that nationalizing health insurance will cut costs by reducing overhead and promote overall health by giving all Americans access to preventive health care. And in doing so, the United States will join the ranks of many other developed nations that have already mandated a national insurance program to guarantee medical care as a basic human right.

Their **opponents argue...** Medicare for All is a political non-starter that would force Americans off employer-based plans, reduce incentives for doctors and providers, increase bureaucracy and inefficiencies in the system, and lead to worse care overall, all the while inflating the already swelled federal deficit. Should private health insurance exist? Or is it time for Medicare for All? - [Medicare for All \(Intelligence Squared, September 17, 2019\)](#)



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REQUIRED RESEARCH (VIDEOS):

Is a Single-Payer System Right For America?,

Hoover Institute, Stanford University, May 30, 2017 [2 min]

<https://youtu.be/35MparEoEw0>

"Medicare-for-All" dominates the Democratic debate,

CBS Evening News, September 13, 2019 [2 min]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfF94KfNxnU>

Is Health Care a Right? || Debate Clip,

Intelligence Squared, September 17, 2019 [2 min]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYWrUbc9F8U>

Quality Of Care with Medicare for All,

Intelligence Squared, September 17, 2019 [2 min]

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1416653321841899>

Santelli Exchange: "Medicare for All" projected to cost \$32.6 trillion,

CNBC News, August 14, 2018 [3+ min]

<https://www.cNBC.com/video/2018/08/14/santelli-exchange-medicare-for-all-projected-to-cost-32-point-6-trillion.html>

REQUIRED RESEARCH (ARTICLES):

The Surprising Origins of 'Medicare for All',

TIME Magazine, May 30, 2019 [PDF]

<https://time.com/5586744/medicare-for-all-history/>

IMPORTANT: *It's okay to skim parts of this article; it can help put the debate into a more clear context.*

Medicare for All: Definition and Pros and Cons,

Sarah Fisher, Investments Expert, Smart Asset, August 23, 2019

<https://smartasset.com/insurance/medicare-for-all-definition-and-pros-and-cons>

Should the U.S. have Medicare for All?,

The Thread, March 17, 2020

Shorter Version: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1OuLk3SS8oMtF9XqibpdB1LD75-y0Mt65>

<https://www.thethreadweekly.com/news/medicare-for-all-pros-and-cons>

[For Tournament Prep!] *The Pros and Cons of Single-Payer Health Plans,*

Urban Institute, March 2019

https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/99918/pros_and_cons_of_a_single-payer_plan.pdf

Note: *The Urban Institute is a highly prestigious organization. This 10-page document is FANTASTIC!*



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OPTIONAL RESEARCH (ARTICLES & VIDEOS):

Single-payer would drastically change American health care; here's how it works,

Washington Post, October 18, 2017

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-biz-how-single-payer-health-care-works-20171018-story.html>

Medicare for All Is Not Enough,

Dr. Adam Gaffney, Harvard University, *The Nation*, March 31, 2022

<https://www.thenation.com/article/economy/healthcare-corporations-private-equity/>

Replace Private Insurance With Medicare for All,

Intelligence Squared, September 17, 2019 [Video = 86 min = Optional]

<https://www.intelligencesquaredus.org/debates/replace-private-insurance-medicare-all>

IMPORTANT: *Top experts debate "Medicare for all" (Pls see main points section!!).*

Fundamental health reform like 'Medicare for All' would help the labor market,

Economic Policy Institute, March 5, 2020

<https://www.epi.org/publication/medicare-for-all-would-help-the-labor-market/>

What Is "Medicare for All" – Features, Costs, Pros & Cons,

Money Crashers, Last Accessed: August 2020

<https://www.moneycrashers.com/medicare-for-all-features-costs/>

The Pros and Cons of Single-Payer Health Care Plans,

First Quote Health, Last Updated: June 23, 2022

<https://firstquotehealth.com/health-insurance/news/single-payer-health-care-pros-cons>

What is Universal Health Care?,

Mint Life, Last Updated: July 6, 2022

<https://mint.intuit.com/blog/trends/what-is-universal-health-care/>

Pros and Cons of Universal Healthcare AKA Medicare for All,

Coronis Health, March 5, 2020

<https://www.coronishealth.com/blog/pros-and-cons-of-universal-healthcare-aka-medicare-for-all/>

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When contacting me, please include your name and class information (day/time). Thanks!



21ST CENTURY DEBATE

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"EXTRA" INFORMATION:

Should All Americans Have the Right (Be Entitled) to Health Care?,

Procon.org, Last Updated: May 4, 2020

<https://healthcare.procon.org/>

In the United States, 27.5 million people (8.5% of the US population) do not have health insurance. Among the 91.5% who do have health insurance, 67.3% have private insurance while 34.4% have government-provided coverage through programs such as Medicaid or Medicare. Employer-based health insurance is the most common type of coverage, applying to 55.1% of the US population. [118] The United States is the only nation among the 37 OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) nations that does not have universal health care either in practice or by constitutional right. [119]

Proponents of the right to health care say...

that no one in one of the richest nations on earth should go without health care. They argue that a right to health care would stop medical bankruptcies, improve public health, reduce overall health care spending, help small businesses, and that health care should be an essential government service.

Opponents argue...

that a right to health care amounts to socialism and that it should be an individual's responsibility, not the government's role, to secure health care. They say that government provision of health care would decrease the quality and availability of health care, and would lead to larger government debt and deficits.

What Is Single-Payer Health Insurance?,

The Balance, Last Updated: April 5, 2022

<https://www.thebalance.com/is-single-payer-health-insurance-a-good-deal-how-does-it-work-4175823>

Pros Explained...

- **Access to preventative care improves the health of society**
Preventative care can find health issues when they begin instead of when they are a problem. For example, vaccines can prevent the spread of disease. Annual check-ups can catch issues such as high cholesterol at an early stage. Doctors can then prescribe lifestyle changes rather than perform costly surgeries or pass out costly drugs.
- **People won't go bankrupt because of medical needs**
Single-payer systems remove the choice that patients may have to make between their health and medical debt.
- **Total healthcare spending could decrease**
It's hard to guess the effects a change in a system would have on total costs. Given the range of options for how a single-payer system could take shape, many argue that billions of dollars could be saved.

Cons Explained...

- **Job loss among private health insurance companies**
If the U.S. were to get rid of the private healthcare system, many people might lose their jobs. Healthcare providers would see the least amount of job loss. Those who work in private network billing would see major changes, if not outright job loss.
- **Wait times could increase**
When American and Canadian healthcare systems are compared, wait time is one of the main topics of concern. It's unclear whether longer wait times are a unique feature of Canada's system or whether they are common in all single-payer systems. (Australia and the UK reported shorter wait times than Canada.) Whatever the case, it's an issue that needs to be addressed.



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"EXTRA" INFORMATION: *Continued...*

Replace Private Insurance With Medicare for All,

Intelligence Squared, September 17, 2019

<https://www.intelligencesquaredus.org/debates/replace-private-insurance-medicare-all>

IMPORTANT: *Top experts debate "Medicare for all" (Pls see main points section!!).*

In Favor of the Motion...

- The United States government should follow the lead of other nations and guarantee affordable, accessible health care as a basic human right.
- A single-payer system would cut overhead costs by streamlining resources and making navigating the healthcare system easier for consumers.
- A Medicare for All system would alleviate the burden of having to navigate multiple private insurance plans, allowing providers to spend more time treating patients and improving the quality of their care.
- The current health healthcare has perverse incentives and a fee-for-service model. Private health insurance often still leaves patients with exorbitant bills.

Against the Motion...

- Individuals should have the freedom to choose how they manage their health, and only a free market will provide competitive options for healthcare consumers. Plus, according to recent polls, most workers are satisfied with their private, employer-sponsored coverage.
- Medicare for All is simply too expensive. Right now, the federal debt exceeds \$22 trillion, and according to a range of economic assessments, Medicare for All promises to add trillions more.
- Under a single-payer program, physicians would likely receive less compensation, which could disincentivize practitioners and discourage future health care professionals from joining the field.
- If the bureaucratic mishandling of the Department of Veteran Affairs or United States Postal Service is any indication, the government should not be trusted with managing one of the largest sectors in the U.S. economy.