

Health Care

Ethical Reflection

- Providing for basic human needs benefits all of society.
- All persons have a right to basic preventative, primary and long-term health care services.
- *“Responding to those who were sick was integral to the life and ministry of Jesus and has been a central aspect of the Church’s mission throughout its history. Health care and healing are concrete manifestations of God’s ongoing care for and redemption of all creation.”* (Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor, ELCA 2003)

Background

- The numbers of uninsured have rapidly grown since the middle nineties.
- Those without insurance cope by relying on emergency room care or wait until a serious condition exists.
- The private sector has demonstrated an inability to provide parity in access.
- Social and individual good is often superceded by private interests (pharmaceuticals, insurance).

Current Situation

- The number now losing health care insurance because they have no work is skyrocketing. Add to that the number of under-insured, and the health care crisis is undeniably severe.

- Those who opposed universal coverage a decade ago now see the benefits of such a plan.
- New York has in place Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus.
- Quality health care professionals and high-tech equipment are available in the state.

What Will Make the Situation Worse

- Reductions in benefits or eligibility at a time more are needing care.
- Excessive deductibles and co-pays.
- Prohibitions on pre-existing conditions.
- Diversion of scarce governmental resources to enrich private corporations.

What Will Help

- Give patients priority of systems and institutions.
- Let medical providers determine the necessity of medical care.
- Reduce the cost of medication to levels paid in other industrial countries.
- Make sure all families and businesses have the choice of opting into a government run system such as Family Health Plus.

(3/2009)

Member Denominations

American Baptist Churches, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA), Reformed Church in America, Religious Society of Friends, United Church of Christ, The United Methodist Church.