

Health Care

Ethical Reflections

- Access to health care is a public good. It should not be apportioned as a market good. Like police and fire protection, public goods are primarily public responsibilities.
- Human beings have equal dignity before God. Justice therefore requires equality in health care quality for all.
- The government has responsibility for the common good, establishing justice, and managing public resources with a minimum of waste.
- The member denominations of the NYSCC have long favored universal health care as a vital basic right.

Background

- Growing numbers of New Yorkers have no health insurance and either rely on emergency room care or wait until a serious condition develops.
- Government has always recognized its responsibility to provide health care (community hospitals, hospitals for the mentally ill, VA, Medicaid.)
- New York has in place programs like Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus.
- Quality health care professionals and high tech equipment are available in the state.
- The private sector has demonstrated an inability to provide parity in access.

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- Health care as a social good is often superceded by private interests (e.g. pharmaceuticals, insurance).
- Presently some have access to quality health care professionals and high tech equipment (i.e. veterans, those with sufficient means, employers that provide health care coverage as a benefit, or are on Medicaid/Medicare). Those who cannot afford what is available use emergency rooms or wait until more expensive care is needed.

What Would Help

- A just health care system would provide the same benefits for all who require care.
- Every New York resident would receive comprehensive health and mental health benefits.
- Costs would be distributed equitably, as with other public goods.
- Costs would be controlled responsibly, as with other public goods.
- Access to health services would be available throughout New York State.
- New York's purchasing power would be used to force lower prescription drug prices.

(2/4/08)

Member Denominations in New York

American Baptist Churches, Empire Baptist Missionary Convention, 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.

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