



National Health Insurance Fact Sheet

Did you know that...

- ❖ **America's health care system is ranked 37th in the world, right after Costa Rica, by the World Health Organization¹.** We rank 42nd in infant mortality, after Cuba and Taiwan, well behind Canada and the European nations².
- ❖ **In the US, we spend more per capita on health care than any other country on earth.** We spend about twice as much as the Canadians, and almost three times as much as the British and the Japanese³.
- ❖ **1 in 6 Americans has no health insurance coverage at all.** That's 47 million people, 16% of the population. Millions more struggle with increasing premiums, deductibles, and co-pays⁴.
- ❖ **The uninsured live sicker and die younger.** The Institute of Medicine calculated in 2004 that 18,000 people die every year purely because they don't have any insurance. That's almost 6 World Trade Center disasters every year⁵.
- ❖ **Medical bills are the leading cause of personal bankruptcy.** Even more surprising, 75% of those declaring bankruptcy had insurance at the time they got sick. Even with insurance you're not safe⁶.
- ❖ **Public opinion polls consistently find that 65% or more of Americans surveyed favor national health insurance, even if it means increased taxes.** More and more, business and labor groups are understanding that our current system is unsustainable. In a 2008 survey of U.S. physicians, 59% favored national health insurance versus 32% opposed⁷.
- ❖ **Both the General Accounting Office (GAO) and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) reached the same conclusion: if we eliminate private health insurance and cover everyone under a single government program, we would increase efficiency and cut overhead so much that it would leave enough money to cover all the uninsured⁸.**
- ❖ **Every other industrialized nation in the world has come to the same conclusion – a government sponsored program of universal health insurance.** The United States stands alone, spending the most, covering the fewest, and yielding poorer health outcomes compared to the rest of the developed world. The Germans instituted their plan in 1883!
- ❖ **We already have a program of government sponsored insurance to cover all Americans over age 65 - Medicare.** It should be expanded to cover everyone. Government financed but privately delivered healthcare is the commonsense solution to our problem.

¹ World Health Organization, World Health Report 2000 <http://www.who.int/whr/en/>

² CIA World Fact Book <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

³ WHO Ibid.

⁴ Kaiser Family Foundation <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/index.jsp>

⁵ Institute of Medicine, 2004 <http://www.iom.edu/?id=17632&redirect=0>

⁶ Himmelstein, Warren, Thorne, and Woolhandler. 2/2/05. Health Affairs.

⁷ Carroll, A. Ann Intern Med 4/1/08

⁸ PNHP.org web site http://www.pnhp.org/facts/single_payer_system_cost.php