

PAUL RYAN'S PLAN WILL DESTROY MEDICARE

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's VP pick **Paul Ryan** wants to radically change Medicare as we know it.



Ryan's plan, developed with Democratic Senator Ron Wyden last year, (and misleadingly known as "premium support" because the government would pay a part of your premium) **would:**

- Raise the eligibility age from 65 to 67.
- Give seniors a set amount of money (a voucher) to purchase private insurance.
- Keep voucher payments from increasing in tandem with the rising costs of insurance premiums.

This means that **seniors and the disabled would be paying more and more out of pocket for their healthcare**. A Congressional Budget Office analysis estimates that seniors would pay 61% of their healthcare costs out of pocket by 2022 (as opposed to 27% if Medicare stayed as is).

PAUL RYAN'S PLAN WILL WEAKEN MEDICAID

In 2013, his proposal would eliminate the existing matching-grant financing structure of Medicaid, and would instead give each state a predetermined block grant. States would be forced to reduce their spending and lower the size of their Medicaid programs "by cutting payment rates for doctors, hospitals, or nursing homes; reducing the scope of benefits covered; or limiting eligibility.

By shifting healthcare costs to the disabled, the elderly, and the poor, Ryan's proposal is a blueprint for how to protect private insurance profits.

Sources:

<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2011/04/06/173880/cbo-paul-ryan-budget/>

<http://thinkprogress.org/health/2011/02/28/171959/block-grant-nga/>

http://cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/ftpdocs/121xx/doc12128/04-05-ryan_letter.pdf

IMPROVED MEDICARE FOR ALL WILL SOLVE OUR HEALTHCARE CRISIS

Government programs internationally and in the United States **have a better track record of providing universal, comprehensive care and controlling healthcare costs** than private health insurers.

Medicare:

- Provides 97% of Americans 65 and older with healthcare.
- Has reduced poverty among the elderly by nearly two-thirds.
- Spends less than 2% of its funds on administrative overhead (as opposed to private insurers' 17%).

Contrary to popular rhetoric by both Republicans and Democrats, **Medicare is not going bankrupt**. Healthcare costs as a whole are what are growing at a faster rate than any other expenditure, and Medicare is just trying to keep up. In fact, Medicare reimbursement rates are actually increasing at a slower rate of inflation (2% less) than private insurance rates.

The way to save Medicare is by improving it and expanding it to everyone. Medicare-for-all (otherwise known as a single-payer system) would truly put people above profits. Private plans with limited networks dictate which physicians patients may see and which hospitals they may use, yet Medicare gives beneficiaries completely free choice of physician and hospital. By covering everyone with Medicare and putting them in a single risk pool, we would be able to slash administrative costs and implement effective cost-controls.

What You Can Do

Call Congress at (202) 224-3121 and ask for your senators' and/or representative's office. Tell them you oppose any cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security and that you support improved Medicare-for-all.

Join Healthcare-NOW! and start organizing your community to fight back. Learn more at www.healthcare-now.org.

Sources:

<http://www.healthreformgps.org/wp-content/uploads/412544-Medicare-Medicaid-and-the-Deficit-Debate.pdf>

http://www.medicarerights.org/pdf/Medicare_A_National_Treasure.pdf

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<http://pnhp.org/blog/2012/08/14/ryans-premium-support-proposal-for-medicare-myths-and-facts/>

