The Dream of Great Health Care on the Cheap

I contend that the problem with the several plans for national health insurance is that the politicians want to promise the population the best health care but don't want to pay for it.

at American Thinker (see recommended sites)

December 12, 2007
Are Health Care Costs 'Too High'?
By Steven M. Warshawsky

excerpts

On the one hand, high levels of health care spending is a good thing because it means that millions of Americans are receiving the highest quality medical care that is available anywhere in the world. Compared to citizens of other western countries, the average American has more access to the best doctors, the best facilities, the best medicines, and the best diagnostic and treatment technologies. This is why people from Canada and Britain and Europe, indeed from all over the world, come to the United States to obtain needed medical care that is not available to them in their home countries. This even includes Canadian mothers who are sent to the United States to give birth because their local public hospitals lack bed space and the ability to handle high-risk pregnancies. So much for the alleged superiority of "single-payer" health care systems.

Yet the highest quality medical care in the world comes at a steep price. This price has nothing to do with "greedy" doctors, HMOs, and drug companies. Rather, as with any other good or service, the price of medical care fundamentally is determined by the value of the resources required to produce it. And the resources required to produce, say, a world-class cardiologist or orthopedic surgeon or oncologist are extremely

valuable.

Nevertheless, even in a free market, total health care spending in this country still will be very high. As noted previously, high-quality health care is extremely expensive, and Americans have enormous demand for the best medical care money can buy. There is nothing inherently “bad” about this. The United States is an extremely rich country, and we have enough wealth to expend a large percentage of our gross domestic product on health care, while still providing for our other vital needs, e.g., national defense.

However, we do not have enough money for the government to “promise” every American, regardless of age or condition, that he or she will receive the best available medical care. We are not that rich, and never will be.

read the complete post at http://www.americanthinker.com/2007/12/are_health_care_costs_too_high.html