

Good Health and Healthy Communities

Quest: A health care system that works for all of us, with good health and healthy communities.

The problem – villains and their threats: Big insurance and drug corporations – and even hospitals – are profiteering off our being sick instead of being rewarded for keeping us and our communities healthy.

- Skyrocketing insurance company deductibles, high hospital charges and price gouging by prescription drug corporations are unaffordable - forcing us to choose between health care and other basics.
- Corporations and the super rich are using campaign cash and lobbyists to hold down wages and benefits. Flat wages, jobs that don't give us the time to care for our families, poor housing in unsafe communities, the high cost of getting to work and retirement worries all mean more stress and worse health.
- Barriers to community and individual well being – underfunded education, unsafe housing, pollution, lack of public transportation, biased medical research – do real harm to the health of many people color.

Our solution – heroes: We need a health system that works for our health and healthy communities, not corporate profits.

- Every community has nutritious food, clean air and water, good housing in safe communities, good jobs, places to exercise and play.
- Health care coverage that includes all the health care services we need and that we can afford to use it when we need it.
- Quality care and community supports working together to keep us healthy and treat us when we are sick.

How we get there: We must rewrite the rules of our health care system to:

- Make sure that everyone can afford good coverage, which pays for all our health care needs, with insurance premiums based on what we earn and can afford.
- Make sure we can afford to obtain care when needed, by eliminating deductibles, lowering co-payments and putting an end to drug corporation's profiteering by requiring affordable prescription drugs prices.
- Focus on the keys to keeping healthy – a healthy environment, good housing in safe communities, affordable healthy food. Being able to get to work, at a good job, so we can care for and support our families.
- Insist on getting value for our health care dollars, with common sense measures that pay hospitals and doctors for how well they take care of patients; and by providing incentives to coordinate care, keep us healthy, help us take care of our own health, and improve the health of our communities.
- Assure that all of us, regardless of our gender or our race or ethnic background, get access to quality care, investing in research and services that take account of our differences, our communities and our cultures.
- Guarantee that patient and community advocates have a strong voice when the rules of our health care system are being written.

Call to action: We can create a health care system that works for all of us, not just the wealthy few.

- It's time that our elected officials stand up to the insurance and drug corporations and hospital chains and write the rules so that they put the health of our families and communities before their profits.
- We can demand that everyday people have a voice in the health care system.
- Americans are proud of the best of our health care. It's time we worked together to make the best of American health care work for all of us.