

Federation Briefing

The Dangers of Medicare Rationing & Protecting the Pro-Life Solution



Medicare is in Trouble

Medicare is government-run health insurance for people 65 years and older funded by the payroll taxes of working Americans.

The coming retirement of the “baby boomers” will place a strain on the smaller generation of workers today. Why?

- Fewer workers paying for more retirees = less money to support Medicare’s needs.
- Development in healthcare technology has corresponded with a growth in the cost of healthcare.
- People live longer, which increases the duration of care.

To fix the problem, we can either:

1. Raise payroll taxes to meet the necessary price.
2. Control use of each beneficiary (aka rationing).
3. Use the Pro-Life solution!

Rationing Leads to Euthanasia.

1. The first option, raising taxes, is politically unrealistic.
2. In Medicare Rationing, instead of adding more tax money, the government would limit the availability of services offered by Medicare in order to cut costs. Only so much money would be allowed. The result?
 - To determine who gets service, each patient would need to request approval from a Medicare plan. Based on rules determining utility and quality of life, the service could be approved, delayed, or denied.
 - If your request is denied, and the government has made it illegal to spend your own money to save your own life, then you are out of luck.
 - Not being able to spend your own money to save your own life is **involuntary euthanasia**.

Making it illegal to spend money to save your own life = involuntary euthanasia

PFFS: The Pro-Life Option

3. The third option, known as Private Fee for Service (PFFS), does not break the bank or lead to involuntary euthanasia.

Medicare rationing creates a ceiling, but PFFS lays a floor, giving older Americans government payments toward the cost of insurance, but allowing them to spend their own money to get insurance less likely to ration.

PFFS takes widespread pressure off the workforce and places it on the shoulders of the individual. It assumes, because other prices have dropped over the past 50 years and wages have increased, that individuals can keep up with the healthcare cost’s rate of growth.

However, PFFS understands the increase in wages is not equal. PFFS allows for private cost-shifting, where physicians shift costs from those who cannot afford it to those who can afford it, making available life-saving services to those with fewer resources.

Why Is It Pertinent?

When Congressman Pete Stark (D-CA) took over the House Health Subcommittee in 2006, he made it clear that he hoped to abolish PFFS and leave rationing plans as the primary option for Medicare.

He believes, contrary to what we have stated, that PFFS hurts the poor and benefits only the rich.

Already, in the debate over SCHIP, the House attempted to fund the SCHIP expansion by reducing the PFFS option in Medicare. Fortunately, SCHIP was amended and PFFS saved.

Congress will take up Medicare head on, and PFFS surely will be a target. With the upcoming ‘08 Election, we may not have the luxury of a presidential veto.

One day, we will all die.

Will your dying day be forced on you because you were refused care?

What can you do?

1. Educate Others on this pro-life issue.
2. Stay tuned to www.lartl.org for action alerts.

