

Medicare For All?



With the opening of the new Congress and change to Democratic control of the House of Representatives we are hearing renewed calls for "Medicare For All" residents of the United States. This has become a rallying cry for the "Progressive" wing of the Democratic Party. Not all Democrats are admitted "Progressives" but a growing number appear to be.

"Progressive" is a kinder and gentler word for "Socialist" and some champions for this cause readily admit to Socialist leanings. Socialist is in turn, often associated with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics/Russia and other Socialist countries like Venezuela, Cuba and many others.

If you would like an example of living in a Socialist Country, you might want to vacation in Venezuela this year. Make it soon. The country is in "end stage" Economic Collapse.

"Medicare For All" has a nice "ring" to it and on the surface would appear to be a way to provide Universal Medical Care to everyone on a simplified, single payer basis. The idea sounds simple enough to be attractive.

A similar proposal was studied under Bill Clinton's Presidency with Hillary Clinton heading up a task force to work out a plan for implementation. After much study and spending millions of dollars on the proposed idea it was ultimately determined to be unworkable.

Several studies have been done and reported in Bloomberg and other outlets that place the estimated cost of such a proposed plan at between 32 Trillion and 42 Trillion Dollars over 10 years. That's about 3.2 Trillion to 4.2 Trillion Dollars a year and would approximately double current Federal Spending.

It should be noted that Medicare as it currently operates is on the road to Bankruptcy. Government Trustees, including Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, Labor Secretary Alex Acosta, and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, issued a report that Medicare's trust fund will run out in 2026 and the combined trust funds of Social Security will run out in 2034. Source: The Washington Examiner - Saturday January 26, 2019 - from a report by Joseph Lawler June 05, 2018.

Many people believe that Medicare is "Free" healthcare for Senior Citizens. It is not. Medicare is not free. Premiums for Medicare are based in part on income - visit: [MyMedicare.Gov](https://www.mymedicare.gov) - but if I take myself as an example, I'm a pretty ordinary Senior on a modest income, the following shows my Medicare Medical Insurance and Medicare Prescription Plan monthly premiums for this year. Keep in mind that plan premiums are for each individual. Mine total just a bit over \$300 a month this year. If on a "Medicare For All" plan and I was one of a family of five, we could be paying a

total premium of \$1,500 a month.

How Much Will I Get And When?	
• Your monthly amount (before deductions) is	
• The amount we deduct for Medicare Medical Insurance is (If you did not have Medicare as of November 16, 2018, or if someone else pays your premium, we show \$0.00.)	<u>\$274.60</u>
• The amount we deduct for your Medicare Prescription Drug Plan is (We will notify you if the amount changes in 2019. If you did not elect withholding from your Social Security payment, we show \$0.00.)	<u>\$26.90</u>

Please keep in mind also that Medicare Medical Insurance does not cover everything and has co-pays, deductibles and maximums. The same for the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan. When your limits run out during the year and, "you" are "on your own" for the cost of care or prescriptions for the rest of that year, is where we Seniors get the phrase "Donut Hole". I hit my own "Donut Hole" last year on my Medicare Prescription Drug Plan in October.

For the tens of millions of citizens who might not want to be a part of "Medicare For All" and are happy with their current insurance, don't worry, "If you like your Doctor and Insurance, you can keep them, and that's a promise!" Hmmm - Where did we hear that before?

I am sure that Congress, most government employees and various other "special interests" would find a way to exempt themselves just as they did from the "Affordable Care Act". Hardly "Medicare For All". "All" never seems to include our "Ruling Class".

For Senior Citizens the premium is withheld from our Social Security payment. What would the Government do to collect premiums from those who don't have a check to withhold the premium from, or those who don't work for a paycheck? What about those who can't or won't pay?

What would happen to the cost of care? Are there enough doctors to make the plan work? Not all doctors are currently willing to accept Medicare patients. There are many unanswered questions.

In the news and something to think about.

Bob Bandy