

Medicare Maladies

A Series that Exposes the Dangerous Elements of the Medicare Bill currently in Committee

MM #26: Hey, Kids! Guess What YOU Will Pay For Medicare

Between now and 2030, American households will pay on average \$56,022 each for Medicare—\$16,127 of that for a proposed prescription drug entitlement alone.

That's why more young people should pay attention to what lawmakers are doing with Medicare, writes Heritage Foundation health-care expert Derek Hunter in an Aug. 19 essay.

"Our futures are being formed," Hunter says. "But are we paying attention? Frankly, most lawmakers don't expect us to: We rarely make plans for the weekend until Friday rolls around, so it's a good bet we're not planning what will happen when we reach age 65—or how we'll obtain medical care when we get there."

Hunter says that if Congress has its way and adds prescription drugs to Medicare without serious, market-based reforms, young people will be burdened with essentially a massive tax liability for their entire lives.

But Hunter doesn't say no to adding a prescription drug benefit for some retirees. But, he says, lawmakers SHOULD target poor seniors who need coverage rather than give it to everyone regardless of how wealthy they may be. He concludes that his fellow members of "Generation X" and other young people should follow what lawmakers are doing to Medicare more closely to be more involved in the debate. "We'd better start paying attention because, either way, we will pay," he writes.

Read more of Hunter's essay and other Heritage Medicare research at heritage.org.

For more information or to receive an e-mail version of "Medicare Maladies," contact medicaremaladies@heritage.org or call Heritage Media Services at (202) 675-1761.

("Medicare Maladies" is a regular feature, launched 7/14/03, from The Heritage Foundation. Sad to say, there's another malady coming your way tomorrow. Daily "maladies" are also available on heritage.org.)