

Dallas Healthcare Policy Conference

Congressman Pete Sessions, Congressman Michael Burgess, MD,
Congressman John Fleming, MD, and Congressman Bill Cassidy, MD.

June 2,
2012

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

SAFETY NET

We support a healthcare safety net, which allows all Americans access to healthcare that is consistently and adequately funded by a rational system, and that ensures coverage regardless of employment or economic status. Provisions should be such that it encourages maximum participation by physicians. Funding for this safety net should be government subsidized without mandates.

PATIENT/DOCTOR RELATIONSHIP

The sanctity of the patient-physician relationship must be the foundation of healthcare in America and is the product of every individual's right to choose. This bond is freely chosen and based upon mutual trust, informed consent, and privileged confidentiality involving every citizen. This sacred trust must not be violated.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

In order to have a sustainable healthcare system every patient has to have a personal investment in the cost and maintenance of their care. The patient should be empowered to responsibly choose the best use of their health care resources.

CHOICE (PHYSICIANS AND PATIENTS)

Patients are entitled to the maximum possible freedoms in choosing how to care for themselves and their families. Physicians and healthcare professionals are entitled to the maximum possible freedoms in choosing how they provide care for their patients, manage their practice, and compete in the market.

PRIVACY (DIGITAL AND EMR)

Privacy must stand at the core of the trusted and inviolable patient/physician relationship in order to maximize the quality of care we provide our patients. Patient's personal information, particularly digital, must be protected. That information must be owned by the patient. It is only the patients' to share, with their informed consent, and must be protected from all third parties including the government.

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PATIENT OWNERSHIP / PORTABILITY

Health insurance may be purchased across state lines consistent with interstate commerce. Each American deserves the opportunity to own their individual healthcare policy which travels with them and is not contingent upon a specific job. The policy should have guaranteed renewability, benefits that are appropriate for their family needs, and irrevocable except by personal choice or cases of fraud.

PAYMENT AND PRICE TRANSPARENCY

Transparency should be encouraged by all those who participate in the healthcare marketplace. It is the patient's right to know the cost of care and the amount of payment provided by insurance or government. It is the core of the free market for consumers and professionals to know the true costs and prices of all goods and services provided.

HEALTH LIBERTY ACCOUNTS

Individual citizens should be permitted to own a Health Liberty Account (HLA), funded by defined contributions from an employer, the government, or a tax-deductible contribution from any source, that is dedicated to the purchase of healthcare coverage and payment for healthcare services. Those unable to fund their own HLA would be eligible for adequate funding for annual healthcare coverage with a defined contribution from the government.

TAX PARITY (DEDUCTIONS)

The purchase of health benefits should be tax deductible whether purchased by the employer or individual, regardless of income. The provision of charitable healthcare services should be a tax deductible item by the physician.

FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE (INEFFICIENCY)

Physicians are committed to protecting the taxpayers by eliminating outright fraud, such as phantom billing by non-physicians, and waste in the system such as excessive physician ordering of healthcare goods and services. We support methods to accomplish this goal, such as the use of smart identification cards for physicians and empowering patients to become efficient consumers of healthcare. Physicians are committed to strengthening and reinvigorating the peer review system. Physicians and their professional scientific organizations should continue to seek efficiencies by eliminating wasteful healthcare spending that does not improve outcomes.

LIABILITY REFORM

The fear of lawsuits drives up the cost of medical care due to the practice of defensive medicine. Tort reform will lower inefficient spending and help to ease the upward pressure on healthcare costs. Examples of such reforms include caps on non-economic damages and the formation of expert medical panels to evaluate and, when indicated, compensate significant adverse outcomes to avoid costly litigation.