

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# Where We Go From Here

WHILE SOME of the ideas put forward in this book are new, many have been advanced for several years by influential and respected researchers and political leaders. The leaders of the two major political parties have said they will pursue an "incremental" reform agenda rather than endorse sweeping reorganization, a sign perhaps that the NCPA and ALEC agendas are being taken seriously in Washington. But the forces opposed to realistic reform are extremely powerful. Unless thousands of concerned citizens make their opinions heard, the promising reforms described in Chapter 6 may never get a fair hearing.

### *What You Can Do*

1. **Write and call your state legislator, Congressman, and Senators.**

Letters to elected officials *are* read, and they can have a major influence on the legislative process. Many elected officials say that if they receive just *twenty* letters on a given subject, they feel they must respond to their constituents' concerns. If you do not know who your elected representatives are, call your local public library or board of elections.

When you contact these officials, tell them you are aware of the problems of high health care spending and the growing number of people lacking insurance, but you do not believe the solution lies in national health insurance, managed competition,

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mandatory employer-provided insurance, or socialized medicine. Tell them you support proposals containing the money-saving and consumer-empowering provisions of the NCPA and ALEC plans. Ask them to examine these proposals seriously and support them when the issues come before them in meetings or for votes.

### 2. Learn more about the issues.

There are many excellent books and shorter publications addressing health care spending, the problem of the uninsured, and the solutions that are needed. Here are some that we specifically recommend:

*An Agenda for Solving America's Health Care Crisis*, by the NCPA Health Care Task Force (Dallas, TX: National Center for Policy Analysis, 1990), 33 pp.

*The ALEC Health Care Reform Proposal*, by the ALEC National Task Force on Health Care (Washington, DC: American Legislative Exchange Council, 1992).

*Controlling Health Care Costs with Medical Savings Accounts*, by John C. Goodman and Gerald L. Musgrave (Dallas, TX: National Center for Policy Analysis, 1992), 40 pp.

*Health Care in America: The Political Economy of Hospitals and Health Insurance*, edited by H.E. Frech III (San Francisco, CA: Pacific Research Institute, 1988), 401 pp.

*A National Health System for America*, edited by Stuart M. Butler and Edmund F. Haislmaier (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 1989), 127 pp.

*Freedom of Choice in Health Insurance*, by John C. Goodman and Gerald L. Musgrave (Dallas, TX: National Center for Policy Analysis, November 1988), 36 pp.

**3. Buy multiple copies of this book for your friends and neighbors.**

This book can serve as a conversation starter or even a point of departure for the formation of a local pro-consumer and pro-choice health care reform group. If you thought it helped give you the facts and information you need to take a position in the public debate, then consider giving copies to your friends and neighbors. Most people will read a book if someone they know recommends it or gives it to them as a gift.

**4. Support organizations that are fighting for responsible health care reform.**

The organizations that developed the NCPA and ALEC plans and produced this book are supported by individual, corporate, and foundation contributions. They rely on voluntary aid from people like you to continue their work. Contributions are tax deductible as charitable gifts. The groups can be contacted at:

National Center for Policy Analysis  
12655 North Central Expressway, Suite 720  
Dallas, Texas 75243  
214/386-6272

American Legislative Exchange Council  
214 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E.  
Washington, DC 20002  
202/547-4646

The Heartland Institute - Chicago  
P.O. Box 2708  
Chicago, Illinois 60690-2708  
312/427-3060

The Heartland Institute also has offices in Milwaukee, Wisconsin;

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Detroit, Michigan; Cleveland, Ohio; St. Louis, Missouri; and Kansas City, Missouri. Information and additional copies of this book can be obtained by contacting any of these offices.

### *A Parting Thought*

Early in this book we described the “subjective” nature of values and how this made comparisons of health care costs and spending extremely difficult. Each person places his or her own value on health and health care, just as he or she independently values every other good and service. Because valuing is a private affair, we ought to respect every person’s judgment of value, and consequently his or her right to choose among available options.

The current debate over health care reform has a lot to do with respecting other people’s judgments. Some of the reforms being advocated—national health insurance, managed competition, mandatory employer-provided insurance, and socialized medicine—would immediately take away freedoms Americans have come to expect. In the long run, we believe these “reforms” would result in even greater restrictions on personal choice, and as a result, less valuable outcomes for most people.

If you believe the solution to America’s health care problems is to be found in empowering consumers—by expanding choice and removing distorting subsidies, taxes, and regulations—please make your voice heard today. Those who do not respect your right to choose dominate the public debate . . . and they will succeed in limiting your freedom *unless you act now*.