



Position Paper: Health Care
Adopted: April 20, 2016

Summary

The Chico Peace and Justice Center:

- believes that health care is a human right that should be provided by a government to meet its citizen's needs.
- supports universal health care for the United States: government health insurance for all people living within our borders.
- advocates expansion of government and nongovernmental health care programs and insurance as a transition to universal health care.
- opposes curtailment of such programs as Medicare, Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act, and numerous federal, state, and local health programs.
- applauds and supports the work of local governmental and non-governmental agencies that work with limited resources to provide and support health care in our community.
- argues that a wealthy nation cannot indefinitely depend on organizations, philanthropy, and community members to voluntarily take up the cause of health care.

Text

The role of the United States government in providing health care and insurance for its citizens has been hotly debated from the late 19th century to the present. While numerous developed countries created comprehensive health care systems during that period, efforts in the U.S. have been limited to passage of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965 and the Affordable Care Act of 2012. Governmental and non-governmental agencies and for-profit insurance agencies have partially filled the gap with networks that provide health care for some of those not explicitly covered by governmental health care systems. The Chico Peace and Justice Center maintains three interrelated three positions concerning health care:

1. *Adequate health care is a human right that should be provided by a government to meet its citizen's needs.* (This position is taken on moral and ethical grounds, independently of any stances taken by elected officials or candidates for office.) The support for this position is drawn directly from the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which in 1948 declared that: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control." Having carefully studied the complex arguments surrounding the issue, *CPJC supports universal health care: government health insurance for all people living within our borders.*

2. As an interim stage until such time as health care in the U.S. becomes universal, *the Chico Peace and Justice Center supports efforts to expand government and nongovernmental health care insurance and programs. We further oppose efforts, deliberate or due to economic problems, that would curtail such programs as Medicare, Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act, and numerous federal, state, and local health programs. We believe that the wealth of the United States is more than sufficient to pay for expansion of government programs to achieve coverage for all. Historically, the Peace Center has consistently opposed increased spending military spending at the cost of just systems of support for the health of all people, including special concern for our veterans.*

3. *The Chico Peace and Justice Center applauds and supports the work of local governmental and non-governmental agencies that work with limited resources to provide and support health care in our community. Health care is more than doctors and medicines, and our support includes, but is not limited to, such groups and agencies as Butte County Health and Human Services, the Shalom Free Clinic, Planned Parenthood, the various housing shelters, Catalyst Women's Services, Chico Housing Action Team, the Independent Living Center, the Butte Health Care Coalitions, Youth for Change, and dozens of other organizations that directly and indirectly promote a healthy community. At the same time, the Center emphasizes that these programs are generally underfunded and are at best partial solutions to health care problems. CPJC argues further that a wealthy nation cannot indefinitely depend on organizations, philanthropy, and community members to voluntarily take up the cause of health care. The United States needs universal health care provided by its government.*

References

Chico Help Central.org.

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