

# Health Care and Poverty

A serious crisis in America's society

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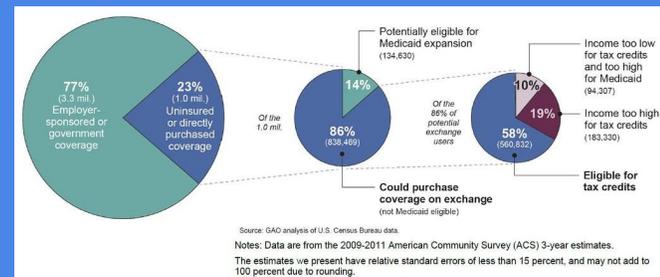
American Social Welfare Policy (412)

Prof. Kang



## Statistics on the relationship between poverty and health care:

- Poverty and low-income status are associated with a variety of different health outcomes: shorter life expectancy, higher rates of mortality and higher death rates.
- 2013 - 14.5% of all US citizens fell below poverty line
- In 2019, 34 million citizens in poverty (slowly declining)
- 2019 - 8% (26.1 million) people did not have health insurance at any point in the year
- 9.2% (26.9 million) were not covered by health insurance at the time (inclining from 2018)
- Percentage of people with employer-provided coverage was only 55.4% in 2019



## Policy proposals to achieve the goal of lowering health care:

- Lowering non-copay patients with lower incomes - Patients without copay have to spend hundreds of dollars just for a simple doctor's visit, making their everyday lives even more difficult than it already is. With a lower cost patients won't refrain from hospitals and doctors offices strictly due to finances.
- Support the development and use of outcome measures for determining payment in new benefit models while ensuring greater use of measures based on outcomes important to patients for evaluating the effectiveness of new models
- Commission annual studies by the National Academy of Medicine to report on price increases on selected drugs of significant interest to patients. Selection criteria will be based on lack of competition, shortages, and significant price increases.
- Protect patients from surprise medical bills - many people don't see the hidden expenses in health care visits, causing their bill to increase.

## Conclusion:

- Free/lower health care is definitely doable considering many other countries have it in effect, but there are many different pros and cons involving it.
- More affordable health care may decrease the quality of each person's services which could lead to an increase of patient-related deaths.
- It lowers the cost of health care for the economy and simplifies the process of visits.
- Overall, the pros outweigh the cons when discussing the uninsured poverty rate across the US, and 26.9 million people are suffering many different effects of the private health care system we have in place today.

## References

- <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2020/income-poverty.html>
- [https://nationalhealthcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/NHC\\_Health\\_Care\\_Costs\\_Initiative\\_2019.pdf](https://nationalhealthcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/NHC_Health_Care_Costs_Initiative_2019.pdf)
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