

KINS COMMUNITY COMMENT (442-5744)

This is Ron Pierre for Community Comment.

My last community comment addressed the initial revelations of the Veteran's Administration scandal. At the time, I knew the scandal was big. I didn't want to believe it was going to be the horror story it is today. Whether the discussion is veteran's health care or Obama care, the operative word is care. Care is best delivered care giver to patient face-to-face, and not via a bureaucratic process or an exchange purchased government mandated insurance product.

As the VA scandal unfolds, there are more horror stories to be told. We heard about the 40 veteran deaths in Phoenix. Those deaths were only the tip of the iceberg! As reports continue to come in, there will be more cover ups, more stories of union driven corruptions, and more revealed criminal negligence cases. Neither VA healthcare nor Obama care can meet the requirement of a doctor to patient relationship.

A government administered health system has nothing to do with health care. Government delivered health care is bureaucratic process with waiting lists, rationed access, and a fertile environment for dishonest practices. Health care should be provider based and focused on the patient. Moreover, if you give a damn about your own life, you shouldn't be required to bet your life on a politician's-interpretation of a solution for your personal well-being.

Because I am eligible for VA services, I went over last week to the local VA clinic to ask why I hadn't been scheduled for my annual follow-up since November 2011. I entered the facility and presented my eligibility card. The intake specialist looked at the screen, and stated I would be treated as a new patient and go through an evaluation. I pointed out that I had been a VA patient since 1996, when I retired with a service-connected disability after 28 years in the Air Force. I outlined my past visits to the Eureka facility, and the letter I had received about the issue of new VA cards. After researching the information I furnished, the clerk said, "Yes you are right. You were seen in November 2011. You should have been seen in 2012."

I told the clerk that I had called in August 2012 and November 2012 for an appointment. On both occasions, I was told to I would be called because of a change of doctors. I didn't expect the system would take me off the patient list. I can personally verified that even here in Eureka the VA system is broken. I have other health care alternatives. Thank God!

If you want to bet your life on government delivered health care, do so at your own risk. I, for one, will take responsibility for my own survival. I said in my last community comment that I take this whole thing very personally. The total percentage of the U.S. population eligible for VA administered health care is 2.5 %. Government can't even handle the VA program with a small population segment.

Can you name your primary care provider? Can you make a timely appointment? Can you deal with a catastrophic cap? Can you afford a high deductible? Can you afford an ever increasing premium? Can you afford to bet your life on a government healthcare system?

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