Anita
FOR ARIZONA

KEEPING FAMILIES HEALTHY

A white paper by Anita Malik,
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Health care is a fundamental responsibility and a human right. As Americans, we are too often given a false choice between saving taxpayer money and enacting universal health care.

The reality is, we don't have to pick.

Current Health Care Environment
America's health care system is in dire need of structural change. **Here are the facts:**

- 28 million people are uninsured.[1]
- 41 million nonelderly adults are underinsured.[2]
- 1 in 5 uninsured adults cannot afford needed medical care due to high costs.[3]
- 50,000 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2015, 33,000 of deaths involved opioids. [4]
- Employers spent $485 billion a year on premiums to offer 152 million Americans health care. [5]
- Americans spent nearly $353 billion on out-of-pocket health care costs annually. [6]

In District 6

- 53% of nonelderly adults have a pre-existing condition.[7]
- 1 in 4 children relied on CHIP and Medicaid (as of 2015).[8]
- 50,000 people at risk because individual mandate repeal. [9]

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[1] https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2017/demo/p60-260.html

[2] https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/healthcare/reports/2018/02/22/447095/medicare-extra-for-all

[3] https://www.kff.org/uninsured/fact-sheet/key-facts-about-the-uninsured-population

[4] https://www.pcmanet.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Savings-from-Mandatory-Use-of-EPCS-FINAL-1.pdf

[5] https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/healthcare/reports/2018/02/22/447095/medicare-extra-for-all

[6] https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/NationalHealthExpendData/downloads/highlights.pdf
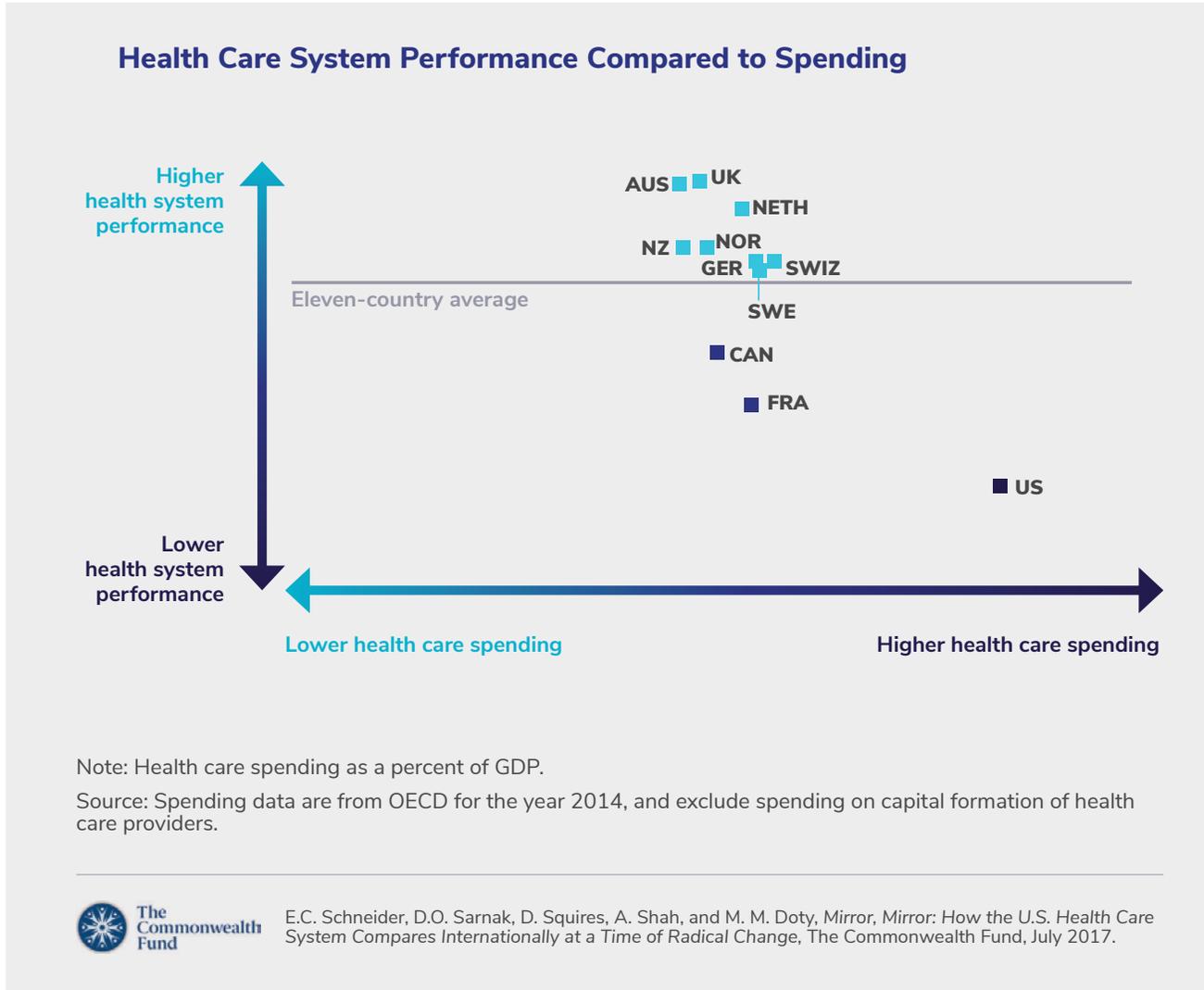
[7] https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/healthcare/news/2017/04/05/430059/number-americans-pre-existing-conditions-congressional-district

[8] https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/healthcare/news/2017/04/05/430059/number-americans-pre-existing-conditions-congressional-district

[9] https://www.indivisible.org/resource/aca-data-congressional-district

The current health care system fails to emphasize the wellness of the individual. As a nation, we spend a larger portion of our GDP on health care than any other developed country in the world. This additional spending does not lead to a better system performance and health outcomes for our citizens.

Health Care System Performance Compared to Spending

Note: Health care spending as a percent of GDP.

Source: Spending data are from OECD for the year 2014, and exclude spending on capital formation of health care providers.

The Commonwealth Fund

E.C. Schneider, D.O. Sarnak, D. Squires, A. Shah, and M. M. Doty, *Mirror, Mirror: How the U.S. Health Care System Compares Internationally at a Time of Radical Change*, The Commonwealth Fund, July 2017.

In fact, total health care spending in the U.S. reached $3.3 trillion a year in 2016. The disparity in cost is due to lacking price standards, insufficient preventive health care, higher pharmaceutical prices and private administration costs than comparative high-income countries.

The U.S. spends more on common treatments and medications than other developed countries like Switzerland, Spain, U.K. and Australia. The additional spending does not produce healthier results. To the contrary, it is wasteful and increases costs for patients.

A Vision for Common-Sense Health Care Solutions and Reforms

To keep our families healthy, we must transition to a modern universal coverage system that prioritizes:

- Patient care and health care above insurance and pharmaceutical company profits.
- Health care efficiencies by reducing costs while ensuring all Americans have better quality health coverage.
- Competitiveness of American workers and businesses in a global economy.

Let's build the foundation for a strong and modern health care system that provides desperately needed preventive care and medicine across our nation.

We can improve the quality of care, increase coverage and reduce costs by:

- Lowering the age to automatically qualify for Medicare to age 55.
- Offering Medicare as a buy-in option for uninsured and underinsured people, including individuals most vulnerable to losing coverage. Gradually opening the buy-in option to everyone in need offers an opportunity to have reliable health care coverage. Buy-in rates are based on income.
- Strengthening pre-existing conditions protections.
- Expanding coverage and resources around mental and behavioral health.
- Establishing an independent national health data repository sharing system across states to improve efficiency and quality of care.
- Creating a nationwide Electronic Prescribing of Controlled Substances system drastically reduces medication errors, thwarts overprescription, reduces fraud and saves lives by countering the opioid epidemic - [Saves at least $27-$53 billion a year](#).
- Standardizing health care rates and treatments to ensure fair and transparent indexed prices.
- Allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices, medical devices and equipment while strengthening existing negotiation protections for other public programs - [Saves at least $134 billion](#) over a 10-year period.
- Combining certain administrative aspects of Medicare, Medicaid, VA and CHIP to increase efficiency and longevity while cutting down on administrative costs.

- Reducing the exclusivity period for pharmaceutical drugs and ensuring publicly-funded R&D projects for the health care industry are in the public domain.
- Increasing the availability of biologic and biosimilar products.
- Updating Medicaid's federal reimbursement rates to improve accessibility for patients.
- Incentivizing primary and preventive care services such as periodic screenings, diagnostic and chronic disease treatment services from an early age.
- Bundling Medicare payments - Saves at least $90 billion over a 10-year period.
- Expanding Medicare coverage to cover dental care and hearing aids.
- Permitting safe and quality drug importation from countries with equal or higher drug standards - Saves at least $7 billion over a 10-year period.
- Investing in blockchain technology to reduce administrative costs, increase efficiency and ensure privacy and data security.
- Expanding electronic EMRs to cut administrative costs and improve access - Saves at least $9.4 billion a year.

Anita will fight to build the foundation for Medicare-for-All. A recent study by the Mercatus Center at George Washington University revealed that a traditional Medicare-for-All proposal has at least a net cost savings of $2 trillion while providing greater medical care to all Americans.