

Medicare Cuts: Who's in Charge of Your Life?

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” *The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776*

One's body, one's mind, one's spirit, one's life. These are gifts from our Creator, not any government. Since ancient Greece, the tradition of the physician has been to care for patients, to ease suffering, to comfort, and to preserve life to the best of our ability and judgment. Each of us also has a responsibility to take care of our body and our health.

Medical decisions have traditionally been made between the physician and patient, sometimes with family involvement. Patients may research treatment options from books and medical journals. Many patients tell me that they pray for God's guidance in their medical decisions.

I have had many patients ask me to pray with them about their medical decisions or their illness. I have never, in 25 years of medical practice, had a patient ask me to call a government bureaucrat to decide treatment.

I have never had a patient say “Wait, let me call my Medicare representative and see what medicine they think I should have.”

Yet, government control of medical treatment is exactly what we are facing with the 2010 healthcare bill, nicknamed Obamacare.

Even the name of the bill “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act” is a cruel irony.

“Affordable care?” We have seen the recent headlines about rising insurance premiums, increasing costs to the taxpayers to provide “free” services, and the increasing costs companies face in meeting the onerous new government regulations. They face fines if they do not comply.

“Patient protection?” The massive government regulations, requirements, mandates, and obstacles to medical care will drive doctors out of medicine, shut hospitals, and reduce access to medical services. Federal panels will decide what treatments you are allowed. The FDA is de-labeling approved medicines to lower costs. This is not a way to “protect” patients.

We only need look to Canada and Britain, to find that government intrusion and control harms patients, increases costs, and shortens life. Examples abound from published reports:

In Canada, patients wait an average of 12-24 months for hip or knee surgery. Getting an MRI or CT scan can take months. More than *50% of the time*, Canadian emergency rooms do not meet Canadian *government* guidelines for prompt ER care. Patients can wait 6 months to a year to see a primary care physician.

I would be a quadriplegic today if I had to wait as long for surgery for my own spinal cord compression as people in Canada wait. Fortunately, I was treated *immediately* in the USA at Johns Hopkins and regained full function.

Long waits can be deadly. Long waits rob us of God's gifts of Liberty *and* Life.

In the USA, men with prostate cancer have a 5-year survival of 92%. For men in the UK, the 5-year survival is only 51%. Government control clearly costs people's lives. Published studies of British hospitals describe patients dying of starvation or dehydration while in hospital.

The rationing board for the United Kingdom National Health Service (NHS), is euphemistically called N.I.C.E. (*National Institute for Clinical Excellence*). NICE has denied as "too expensive" drugs for many common illnesses that affect older people. Here's a partial list of medications NICE has denied: *Avonex* for multiple sclerosis, *Kineret* for arthritis, *Lucentis and Macugen* for macular degeneration, *Aricept* for early stage Alzheimers disease (when the drug is most effective), *Lapatinib*, *Sutent* for breast and stomach cancer, *Herceptin* and *Avastin* for breast cancer, plus denials of other drugs for lung and prostate cancer.

Dr. Donald Berwick is the July 4 recess appointment as "Rationer-In-Chief" for the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The medication and treatment denials we have seen in England for decades are a portent of what is coming for patients in the USA, based on Dr. Berwick's published statement that "It is not a question whether to ration medical care or not, but whether we will ration with our eyes open."

Dr. Berwick is also on record as saying that he is "in love with the NHS" and that healthcare decisions should focus on the collective good, rather than the Hippocratic tradition of focused on the *individual* patient.

The sanctity of life, at all ages, and in all conditions, is ultimately in God's hands. When government controls medical decisions, it makes your life a property of the government. Medical decisions properly belong with you and your doctor and your God.

We have seen what happens when totalitarian regimes control healthcare: human life is no longer valued and respected. People suffer and die. To paraphrase Ronald Reagan, *when it comes to your life and health, government is not the solution, it is the problem!*

YOUR Life, YOUR Liberty: Gifts from your Creator. Will you let the government's power grab take them away?

Or will you fight to preserve your freedom to choose healthcare and health professionals without government panels deciding *for you*? When it comes to who controls healthcare, your life is at stake.

You get to decide this November 2 – whose life is it? Yours and God's? Or the Federal Government's?



Dr. Elizabeth Lee Vliet

Elizabeth Lee Vliet, M.D. is a women's health specialist and the Founder of HER Place: Health Enhancement Renewal for Women, Inc. with medical practices in Tucson AZ and Dallas TX.

Dr. Vliet is President of International Health Strategies, Ltd., a global healthcare and education service company whose mission is twofold: liberty in the choice of treatment options and preservation of the Hippocratic tradition of focus on the individual patient.

Dr. Vliet is the 2007 recipient of the Voice of Women award from the Arizona Foundation for Women in recognition of her pioneering advocacy for the overlooked hormone connections in women's health. She is a Director of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, and member of The International Menopause Society, The International Society of Gynecological Endocrinology, American Society of Reproductive Medicine, The Heritage Foundation, and The Freedom Alliance.

Dr. Vliet received her M.D. degree and internship in Internal Medicine at Eastern Virginia Medical School, then completed specialty training at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. She received B.S. and M.Ed. degrees from The College of William and Mary in Virginia.

Dr. Vliet's books include: *It's My Ovaries, Stupid!; Screaming To Be Heard: Hormonal Connections Women Suspect-- And Doctors STILL Ignore; Women, Weight and Hormones; The Savvy Woman's Guide to PCOS, The Savvy Woman's Guide to Testosterone.*

Dr. Vliet has appeared on FOX NEWS, Cavuto, Stuart Varney Show, Fox and Friends and syndicated radio shows across the country addressing these critical issues. She has been an invited speaker for numerous healthcare Town Hall presentations, and guest speaker on how healthcare regulation changes will not only physical but also financial health.

Dr. Vliet's medical and educational website is www.HerPlace.com. For more on healthcare, go to www.TakeBackMedicine.com.

To book Dr. Vliet for interviews, or for permission to publish articles, email [Rose Henning rosehenning@herplace.com](mailto:rosehenning@herplace.com) or call 520-797-9131 (MST).