

“Uncle Same will see you now”

By Dr. Hal Scherz

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As more and more behind-the-scenes information has come out about the 2,000-plus-page health care bill pushing through conference, everyone is beginning to see the connections. The relationships between the insurance and pharmaceutical companies, highly paid lobbyists and congressional staffers, the White House and key legislators have created a rent-seeking bill at the cost of quality care and innovation in medicine. The one relationship that has failed to matter to those in Washington is the relationship between the American people and their physicians. The far-reaching list of government programs, regulations and taxes has only served to strengthen the relationship between government and special interests and weaken the doctor-patient relationship.

In the past, misguided government regulations like HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) have affected the way doctors deliver care, always to the detriment of the patient. Health care providers had to alter the delivery of services because of concerns over frivolous malpractice claims. In every case, placing barriers between the patient and doctor shortchanged the patients and the quality of care they received.

America is on the precipice of a change in the delivery of health care in this country. It will fundamentally destroy the delicate physician-patient relationship, which has been tested over the years but has persevered. It will challenge every doctor in America to make decisions they have never had to make before. The medical community will be forced to decide how much to compromise ethics and morals to practice in a system that limits care in exchange for greater financial reward.

Doctors in America will be forced to choose between accepting direction from a federal medical board or making decisions based on multiple years in medical school and countless hours in the operating room. Each patient in America is unique and deserves tailored care from his or her physician. There is no room for political game-playing when it comes to the health of our nation and the citizens who make it great.



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