

What's Behind The Highly Inflated Cost Of Our Healthcare?

“According to the FDA, more than 2 million serious adverse drug reactions occur each year, and adverse drug reactions are the fourth-leading cause of death, responsible for about 100,000 deaths each year.” – USA Today, March 19, 2008.

Due to the current rapidly evolving global economy, as a nation we are now experiencing an ever-increasing threat to our industry. Our pay scale is considerably higher than that of most developing countries, and due to the rapidly increasing cost of employees' healthcare, we are losing our competitive advantage. Then, as third world countries continue developing their technology, that threat will just escalate, and thus must be addressed. If not, and if the current trend is allowed to continue, our economy will decline each year, until the problem is finally resolved.

Our society spends billions of dollars on employees' healthcare, a cost that continues to escalate at an ever-increasing rate. The basic problem stems from the high cost of the insurance premiums for employees, although, the source of the problem is the increasing the number of medications patients are being placed on – partly due to direct advertising of drugs to the public. Not only is the increasing cost of these premiums becoming a burden to employers, but the end result is also reflected in employees' reduced productivity, as well as more time off for sick leave. And the fault is our current flawed healthcare system – not the employees.

Many unnecessary surgeries are also being performed each year. How much surgery is really necessary? According to the late Dr. Robert S. Mendelsohn's book, *“Confessions of a Medical Heretic,”* around ninety percent of surgery is a waste of time, money, energy, and life.

In 1992, Dr. Nortin Hadler, M.D., a professor of medicine at the University of North Carolina Medical School, concluded that 95 to 97 percent of the coronary bypass surgeries done that year were unnecessary – even though patients are usually told that without the surgery they will die. This is a very serious issue considering just how expensive and highly invasive bypass surgery can be, and that additional surgeries are often necessary within seven to 10 years!

In truth, just like surgeries, most medications prescribed by doctors today are unnecessary; they don't offer a true cure, but instead contribute to a worsening of the patient's overall health. According to Dr. Charles E. Page, M.D., “the cause of most disease is in the poisonous drugs physicians superstitiously give in order to affect a cure.” Fatigue, pain and depression, are quite common side effects associated with many prescription medications, all conditions that contribute to reduced productivity, as well as increased insurance rates. According to a study conducted in 2002 by Georgetown University, adults over 65 fill an average of 20 prescriptions per year. And it's possible that because the Medicare Prescription “Benefit” plan is now in place, that number will dramatically increase – that's a lot of money!

Speaking of spending a lot of money, according to research by the non-profit *Life Extension Foundation*, the average markup over the cost of the ingredients in 16 of the most popular medications was an astounding 78,693 percent, making it the most profitable industry in the entire world. The pharmaceutical companies will continue charging top dollar for drugs whose risks far outweigh any potential benefit. While a lifetime of symptom-suppressing drugs makes much more financial sense to the manufacturer, it definitely doesn't help the employer who pays the higher insurance costs, or the employee with poor health.

The Primary Contributing Factors:

We obviously can't continue doing the same things yet expect to get different results; some necessary changes are in order. Research indicates that time after time, people go through the following process:

1. They seldom need the medications they are taking.
2. Many medications are prescribed to treat side effects associated with their other medications (the typical domino effect).
3. After withdrawing from unnecessary medications, patients' drug-related symptoms soon disappeared.
4. Their health gradually begins to improve, as they no longer experienced the nutritional deficiency that drugs often create.
5. They often feel more energetic, and with antidepressants, their emotions returned and they began feeling more normal.

Where Does It All Start? And What's The Solution?

Dr. Sherry A. Rogers, M.D., in her book *Detoxify or Die* (2002), helps identify the basic underlying problem when she quotes an article from the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* that "documented how over 87% of physicians who make up the panels of 'experts' who determine the practice guidelines for medicine receive compensation from the drug industry. These are the guidelines that your doctors and insurance companies follow" (*JAMA* 287: 6,12-6 17, 2002). Unfortunately, we are not even allowed to enjoy the basic freedom we should all enjoy – the freedom of choosing our own healthcare.

If you, as the employer, are paying the premiums for your employees' insurance, you and your employees should have a say in what coverage they would prefer – not the insurance company.

As an employer, it's time to research self-insuring your employees – which would result in considerable savings, as well as happier, healthier, and more productive employees – or find an insurance company that would provide coverage for a true healthcare system; presently, none are known to exist.

Anyone with knowledge about nutrition, disease prevention and natural therapies could help a corporation establish a far more cost-effective healthcare program. Only by addressing the issue of discriminatory health care coverage, which excludes natural therapies and nutritional supplements, (proven to be far more effective, and much less expensive), can the problem be truly resolved. This change must take place if we ever expect to finally have a true, financially sustainable healthcare system, based on disease prevention.

"The necessity of teaching mankind not to take drugs and medicines is a duty incumbent upon all who know their uncertainty and injurious effects; the time is not far distant when the drug system will be abandoned." – Charles Armbruster, M.D.