

## WHAT IS CCHCC?

The Champaign County Health Care Consumers is an organization of local citizens and health care providers concerned with improving health care delivery to all residents of Champaign County.

The aims are:

1. To be a catalyst of information exchange and cooperative action for those individual consumers and citizens wishing to address health issues, especially cost and accountability services.
2. To participate in health care planning by promoting consumer involvement in HSAs, monitoring health care activities, and providing back-up services to health consumers. The HSA is the local health planning body in Champaign County (see inside).
3. To join in efforts to modify behavior of the general consumer public regarding discriminating usage of the health care system and pursuit of personal lifestyles conducive to good health.

Among the initial activities is a series of education forums to increase consumer awareness on important health issues.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY HEALTH  
CARE CONSUMERS  
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**NEWSLETTER CCHCC**

**June  
1978**



# HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS NEWSLETTER

JUNE, 1978

## HEW DENIES FINAL DESIGNATION OF LOCAL HSA

Following CCHCC intervention, the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare finally disapproved the East Central Illinois HSA application for final designation. The process began earlier this year, when local officials voted unanimously not to approve the HSA application, sharply criticizing the agency for its failure to comply with federal regulations and democratic principles. The HSA application then went to the Statewide Health Coordinating Council, where state officials approved agency designation only with conditions that the HSA "work towards establishing a better socioeconomic representation on the board" and "take cognizance of testimony presented" by the CCHCC and other concerned citizens. Finally, HEW found "serious problems" with HSA plans and disapproved the application, granting an extension of conditional status for only 12 months. Frank Ellis, HEW health official, warned the agency that would "carefully monitor agency progress" and that if all conditions are not met "termination proceedings will be initiated." The failings of this agency are far from only technical in nature. On the contrary, local, state, and federal officials all have found serious deficiencies. Only a minority of HSAs across the country have been disapproved. The ECIHSA is among them.

## CCHCC ENDORSES HSA DENIAL

The CCHCC approves actions to disapprove HSA designation. We revealed that HSA governing bodies are unrepresentative of area residents, particularly segments which are greatly affected by the health care system, e.g., low-income persons and women. We pointed out that this HSA restricts effective public involvement from consumers, labor unions, women and minority groups, religious bodies and local elected officials. We questioned HSA budget priorities. We pointed out deficiencies in the HSA plans. We recommended that officials delay or disapprove the application until the failures are corrected. We presented testimony and represented the public interest at every step in the process. All this has great significance. It shows that an independent health consumer organization can make a difference.

## LOCAL CONSUMER NOMINATED TO AHCC BOARD

CCHCC member Joe Ahearn has been nominated to serve on the board of directors of the Association of Health Care Consumers, a statewide consumer organization. In March, Joe testified before the Illinois Statewide Health Coordinating Council in its deliberations on the East Central Illinois HSA application for final designation. He has been attending monthly SHCC meetings since. In April, he testified before the SHCC and the Human Resources Committee of the Illinois State Legislature on the issue of hospital cost containment. In May, he served as a resource person in workshops at the Fort Wayne, Indiana, regional meeting of the Consumer Federation of America. "The most encouraging sign is that citizens throughout the state are considering the formation of their own local consumer organizations," explained Ahearn.

## HSA APOLOGIZES, AGREES TO CCHCC DEMANDS

At the May meeting of the East Central Illinois HSA, President B. Smith Hopkins publicly apologized for not conducting more public hearings and announced plans to hold hearings in all five of its subareas in the future. The CCHCC has been calling for this action since 1977. In addition, the HSA voted to include consumer organizations as "affected persons" in its Project Review Manual. This change was suggested by CCHCC members at HSA meetings and hearings. The change permits consumer organizations to receive information on projects under review. The original HSA list of "affected persons" identified only providers.

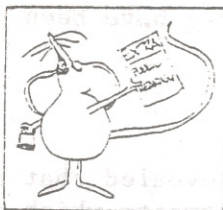


In April local consumers participated in a CCHCC public forum on community health care services and costs. The focus was on who is served and who is excluded from the health care system, and how local programs can be improved. Among the conclusions was that while programs are available to aid low-income persons, information about these programs is often lacking. Among the panelists Andrea Schuver (Cunningham Township Supervisor's Office), George Bell (Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance), Judith Barrier (Francis Nelson Health Center), and Joan Lathrop (Champaign-Urbana Public Health District). Because of the success of these public forums in 1977-1978, a new series is now being planned and will begin in the Fall.

### CCHCC SEEKS NEW MEMBERS, MONEY

The Champaign County Health Care Consumers is an organization committed to improving health care delivery to all residents of our area. In one year, CCHCC has grown from a small group of concerned citizens into a strong consumer organization with a long list of accomplishments. But the continued success of our work depends upon your participation. Our membership is open to all and we encourage you to join. And we urge you to send us a contribution today. We are a nonprofit organization and must have your financial support to continue. Please complete the attached coupon and send us a contribution today.

### Consumer Guide to Local Health Care Planning



Association of Health Care Consumers  
109 North Dearborn Street Chicago Illinois 60602

CONSUMER GUIDE TO LOCAL HEALTH CARE PLANNING is available from the Association of Health Care Consumers. Written by consumers, the book is for the growing number of citizens who are concerned about improving health conditions for all people through public involvement and who believe that health care is too important a matter of public concern to be left to those who provide it.

This book can help you to participate in local health care planning. It explains about the new federal health planning law and the Health Systems Agencies which it created. It provides a guide to what consumers should be doing now.

The book covers such topics as how to be heard at public hearings and meetings, how to participate in health planning boards and committees, and how to complain about local health care services. It also explains how to form a health consumer organization in your community.

Individuals, consumer organizations, health professionals and staff members, representatives of labor unions and minority groups, and local elected officials should have a copy of CONSUMER GUIDE TO LOCAL HEALTH CARE PLANNING

### WHY GET INVOLVED?

It is no accident that legislation often favors health care providers. Indeed, as the Chicago Sun-Times article (below) indicates, health care providers work hard to influence the outcome of legislation that advances their self-interests. The lesson for consumers is clear: Without a strong and independent voice in public affairs, consumer needs will be pushed aside by those who profit from health care:

**DONALD A. UDESTUEN, 34, of Crystal Lake, is sort of the medicine man of lobbyists. "Dr. Don," he is sometimes called. He says a few words and magical things usually happen for his employer, the Illinois State Medical Society.**

What makes the roly-poly Udstuen such a wizard at lobbying is a combination of his close familiarity with the political process and a huge monetary and professional resource base to draw on. Doctors have money, and in many communities they are perceived to possess large doses of clout.

Udstuen also is perceived to have clout—rightly or wrongly—within Gov. Thompson's administration. Consider the links: James L. Fletcher, the governor's top aide, often represented the medical society as a private attorney; the governor's patronage chief, Robert K. Kjellander, was a lobbyist for the medical society, and the governor's father is a doctor.

Unlike some others in his profession, Udstuen does not feel compelled to do all the convincing, cajoling and informing of legislators himself. He has two aides, as well as "hired gun" Shea, to help out. And he can draw on the aid of the 10,000 physicians he represents.

He has his doctors write position papers, brief legislators on technical, scientific matters and even lobby lawmakers directly when they show up for medical treatment.

"There is nothing more effective than a doctor talking to a legislator about health care," Udstuen says.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS  
P.O. Box 2468  
Champaign, Illinois 61820

I want to join CCHCC and continue to receive the CCHCC NEWSLETTER:

☐ \$1-10 membership, depending on your ability to pay. Please pay as much as you can.

My Check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

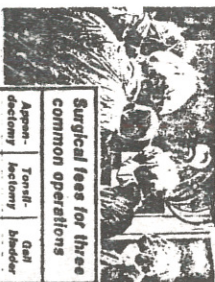
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# Organizing For Health Care

**Health care is 100 important a matter of public concern to be left solely to those who provide it.**



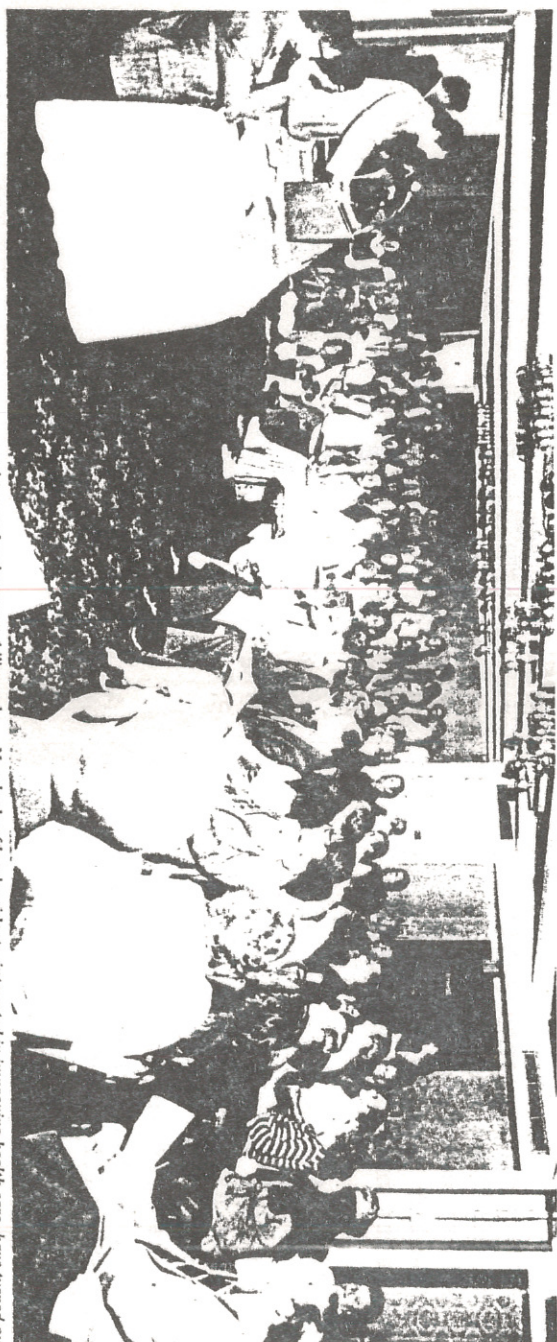
Surgical fees for three common operations			
Agency-fee	Agency-fee	Agency-fee	Agency-fee
Chicago	\$400	\$200	\$630
New York	\$580	\$250	\$900
Los Angeles	\$500	\$225	\$800
San Antonio	\$275	\$125	\$375
Minneapolis	\$300	\$150	\$484
Kansas City	\$350	\$165	\$525
Tampa	\$350	\$175	\$525
Detroit	\$300	\$160	\$500
Philadelphia	\$350	\$150	\$600
Memphis	\$350	\$200	\$600

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In Champaign County an organization of local citizens has been founded to improve health care for all residents of the local area. Calling themselves the Champaign County Health Care Consumers, the organization has been successful in:

- Convincing local officials to sharply criticize the local Health Service Agency (HSA) and demand that it not be given final designation until it complies with federal regulations and democratic principles.
- Electing consumer-oriented candidates to the HSA. Of the twelve contested seats, seven of the CCHCC endorsed candidates were elected.
- Sponsoring several health education forums attended by more than 100 people each.
- Presenting testimony on public involvement in health care planning to committees in the U.S. Senate and House. Barry Checkoway who was invited to Washington for the committee hearings was commended and encouraged by congressional leaders.
- "We believe that major involvement in health and health care planning will come only with the involvement of the public," says Barry Checkoway, one of the founders and a board member of Public Action.
- "But it would be a strategic mistake for us to organize only with reference to the Health Service Agency without an organized and independent agenda of our own. Health Care providers have been doing this for years. Through a group like ours, organized citizens can decide on the consumers which are important to us as consumers and turn the local health planning system in our direction."

Health Service Agencies (HSA's)



Hundreds of local residents, interested in improving health care, have turned out to meetings like these where they succeeded in electing seven consumer oriented members to the HSA board.

Photo by Joe Witke courtesy of the Champaign-Urbana News Gazette

were created by an act of Congress and made responsible for health planning and development locally. The act (National Health Planning and Resources Development Act of 1974) aimed at containing the costs of health care driven up by waste and inefficiency in the health system. The agencies are supposed to review health care services in their area, prevent duplication of services, review federal and state health grants, and reduce costs to consumers. The act placed an emphasis on public notice and open

## Median Net Income Physicians

1939	\$3,263
1955	\$16,107
1967	\$34,740
1976	\$62,799

According to a 1978 report by the President's Council on Wage and Price Stability, "This year physician bills are increasing half again as fast as the inflation rate and the situation may be worsening." Above figures and quote from "Physicians: A Study of Physician Fees," March 1978.

**"Health Care is one of the major organizing issues of the future."**

Senator Edward Kennedy

## Why Health Care?

While health providers and hospitals have regulated health care planning, medical costs have skyrocketed and the problems of quality and accessibility remain. In the last 15 years,

total national health care expenditures have increased by 45 percent to a total of \$139.5 billion in 1976, placing health care ahead of defense in GNP. Physician fees increased by 12.8 percent in 1975 and 11.4 percent in 1976, both higher than any time previously in history. Much of the increase in costs is attributable to waste, inefficiency, and the lack of effective planning in the health care system. Self-regulation by providers has resulted in an excess of hospital beds, overproduction of medical equipment, and unnecessary construction of health facilities. Only consumer health planning can make a difference in improving health care delivery to all.

The decision followed CCHCC testimony revealing that HSA governing bodies are unrepresentative of area residents, particularly low-income persons and women. CCHCC questioned the proposed HSA budget priorities (including \$109,000 rent and \$660 for an executive desk and chair, as well as \$35,000 for an executive director). The HSA application now goes to the Statewide Health Coordinating Council. The CCHCC plans to be there.

For further information on the activities of the group, which is an affiliate of the Illinois Public Action Council, contact:

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