

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS NEWSLETTER:

813 N LINCOLN, URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801

AUGUST 1979

RECORD TURNOUT EXPECTED IN SEPTEMBER 6 HSA ELECTION !!

A record turnout is expected for the upcoming HSA election to be held in the Champaign and Ford Counties Subarea. According to Dick O'Neill, Chairman of the Subarea Nominating Committee, which plans the election each year, over 2000 voters are anticipated to participate in the election of 11 representatives from Champaign County and 2 from Ford County.

By those estimates, this year's election will be by far the largest ever in the 6 year history of local health planning elections. Just 2 years ago, the HSA was overwhelmed when 300 persons showed up to vote in the election which in past years had only attracted 50-75 persons. Last year nearly 500 residents turned out to elect all 13 consumer endorsed candidates by almost a 2 to 1 margin.

This year however, local hospital administrators and the County Medical Society have mounted an expensive campaign to elect their handpicked representatives. The election of similar hospital administrator slates in other communities has resulted in significantly HIGHER HEALTH CARE COSTS TO THE CONSUMER.

The election next Thursday is of particular

importance to consumer advocates. Of the 11 seats up for election in Champaign County, 9 are to be filled by consumer representatives. Only 2 seats are open to providers. Therefore, if the consumers elected are to be representative of consumer interests, it is crucial that consumers turn out in large numbers to elect consumers.

At the same time, those employed in health care settings need to join consumers to insure that their interests are also represented on the Board. A recent national survey revealed that almost all types of health care workers, especially nurses, technicians, and support staff are not fairly represented. We have always supported greater representation of these groups and urge you to vote for the responsible and experienced provider candidates endorsed by CCHCC.

The CCHCC urge all residents of Champaign and Ford Counties to VOTE FOR CONSUMER INTERESTS on September 6. Without your support, a heavy turnout by an elite group of providers and their supporters could result in the election of consumers who fail to represent consumer interests and providers who represent only management interests.

WHY GET INVOLVED?

People are spending more money on health care than ever before. Total expenditures for health care have increased much faster than for most other goods and services. Health care expenditures in the U.S. increased an alarming 140% in only 7 years (from 1970-1977).

Much of the increase is due to waste, inefficiency, and the lack of effective planning in the health care system. There has resulted an excess of hospital beds, overproduction of some hospital equipment, and unnecessary construction of medical facilities. Despite this, the situation is
(Continued on page 2)

VOTE IN THE LOCAL HSA ELECTION

This issue of the CCHCC Newsletter is devoted to local health planning concerns. On Thursday, September 6, all residents of Champaign County will have an opportunity to elect 11 representatives to the local health planning board. Because 9 of these seats are for consumers, it is crucial that consumers vote to elect consumer representatives.

September 6 2pm - 8pm

304 S. Race Urbana

WHY GET INVOLVED?(continued from p. 1)

not hopeless. There are practical ways each of us can help.

Health Systems Agencies were established to ensure that quality health care is available at a reasonable cost. They are trying to eliminate costs that result from the unnecessary duplication of health care resources. They are also working to prevent the costs of inefficient operation of facilities and services from being passed on to consumers.

Successful health planning depends upon strong consumer participation. In many communities, however, hospital administrators and medical societies have spent vast sums to elect their handpicked representatives on HSA boards. They "buy" seats for unrepresentative "consumers" who fail to take consumer viewpoints and for other hospital administrators who fail to pursue public interest. We must not allow this in our own community.

The CCHCC is working to improve health care planning through public involvement. We believe that health care is too important a matter of public concern to be left to those who provide that care, and that health care will improve only with the active participation of the public. The HSA can work, but only with the involvement of consumers. (See endorsements page 3)



Accountability of Regional HSA Members Questioned

New concerns over the accountability of the Regional HSA Representatives from Champaign and Ford Counties Subarea Advisory Committee (SAC) are being raised by other SAC members. Over the summer the SAC's Project Review Committee unanimously recommended approval of a home health services application with two conditions. At a following meeting, the entire SAC accepted the Committee recommendation of two conditions by a 21-1 vote.

However, at the July meeting of the Regional HSA Board, a Champaign-Ford SAC representative, who is also a retired hospital administrator, initiated a motion to approve the application without any conditions. The motion was approved. This action angered a number of SAC members who felt they had been misrepresented by someone who they had elected as representative to the Regional Board. In a letter to other SAC members, Prof. Thomas O'Rourke

Consumer Representation To Be Increased to 60%

At one of its recent meetings, the Champaign-Ford Subarea Advisory Board voted to increase consumer representation on the board from 51 to 60%. This change signifies another victory for CCHCC which had advocated this reform at numerous public hearings over the past two years.

The federal law which established HSA's requires that all governing boards and committees be composed of at least 51% but not more than 60% consumers. The local SAC had kept consumer representation at the minimum 51% since it began operation a few years ago.

The CCHCC and other consumer advocates have supported increasing the number of consumers to 60% for a number of reasons. First, it is believed that more consumers on the board would allow more segments of the community to be represented. Second, providers, unlike consumers, have a vested interest in the business conducted by the HSA. The more consumer participation there is, the more likely health planning in our area will serve the public interest. Under a 51-49% split, consumers are often outnumbered by providers at any particular meeting. The 60-40% split minimizes provider domination and protects consumer participation as was originally intended under the federal law.



ACCOUNTABILITY (Continued from Column 1)

(P) stated that such actions "indicate a failure of representation and accountability and should be of paramount concern to us in this body. What is the purpose of the time consuming and valuable work of this body if your so-called representative fails to represent us...This seems to be a serious breach of confidence by our representative and should receive immediate action by this body." The letter is scheduled to be discussed at the September meeting of the Champaign-Ford SAC.

The issue of accountability is not a new one. Last year SAC members were outraged when another hospital administrator resigned from the SAC immediately following his election as representative to the Regional Board. When a recall vote was suggested, SAC members were informed they did not have the power to recall their Regional representative once elected. Again faced with an issue of accountability, the SAC may be forced to explore ways of reforming the selection and recall process.



CCHCC Urges Voting, Endorses Candidates

Vote in the election of the Champaign-Ford counties Subarea Advisory Council of the East Central Illinois Health Systems Agency (HSA) on Thursday, September 6 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, Race Street, near Lincoln Square, in Urbana. You may register and vote on the same day at the polls.

HSAs examine what health services exist, how they are operating, who they are serving and their effectiveness. They can improve the cost, quality, and accessibility of services. But for health planning to work, HSA board members must broadly represent the area population, give objective consideration to health questions, and pursue a broad community welfare.

THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS has investigated all HSA board candidates and endorsed those who will broadly represent the area population and consumer viewpoints. We are supporting the following persons:

CONSUMERS

LLOYD CARTER	President, NAACP local chapter. Former Urbana city councilor. American Legion.
MILDRED DERRICKS	Telephone company consultant. St. Luke's C.M.E. Church.
JOHN DOUGHERTY	Executive Director, Union of Professional Employees. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, Retired.
STEPHEN GROHS	University of Illinois School of Social Work. Delta Sigma Omicron rehabilitation service organization.
NANCY MORRISON	Incumbent, Champaign Ford HSA subarea council. Assistant Director, Social Science Quantitative Laboratory. American Federation of Teachers.
SHARON PETERSON	Urbana School District 116, teacher's aide for the severely hadicapped.
MARIAN PHILLIPS	Editor, Bilingual Education Project. American Federation of Teachers.
KENNETH STRATTON	Administrator, Champaign School District Unit 4. Former Champaign city councilor. Bethel A.M.E. Church.
SUSAN SULLIVAN	Community health educator. American Public Health Association.

PROVIDERS

REBECCA BAUMER	Carle Hospital, Registered Nurse. Former Public Health Nurse. Board of directors, The Arthritis Foundation.
WILLIAM SILER	Self-employed pharmacist. Author. Co-founder, Gemini Foundation. American Society of Hospital Pharmacists.

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813 N. Lincoln
Urbana, IL 61801

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HSA Approves Union Sponsored HMO Study

A study to determine the feasibility of establishing a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) in Champaign and Vermilion County was given unconditional approval by the HSA last month. The study is being prepared by Federation Outreach, an affiliate of the Twin Cities Federation of Labor. HMO's which are becoming more popular throughout the country, are an alternative to traditional health insurance programs. They emphasize preventative care and provide total health care coverage for a single annual fee. As a result, HMO's have been proven to reduce health care costs to the consumer. The study will take approximately one year to complete.

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CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
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important a matter of
public concern to be
left solely to those
who provide it.***