

RSC Info Alert: HealthCare.gov, Taxpayer Funded Propaganda

On July 1, 2010, as required by PPACA, the HealthCare.gov web portal went live. While Republicans proposed similar portals to be used as consumer information tools, unlike the Obama Administration, they did not envision it as a way to use taxpayer funds to promote political ideology masquerading as “facts.” Many conservatives see HealthCare.gov as the Administration’s newest addition to their health care PR campaign. The Administration claims that certain information is on the web portal for “consumer education” but so far it’s all one-sided.

Below are some highlights of the propaganda being promoted on HealthCare.gov:

- The banner at the top of every page that says “health care is getting better” which is a purely subjective statement.
- Information about Medicare Advantage plans is noticeably absent. While it is well known that Congressional Democrats don’t like Medicare Advantage – it is a whole new low when a senior who wants to learn “more about insurance for benefits that are not covered by Medicare” is not even made aware of their options.
 - The only information listed under “[Find Insurance Options](#)” is information on Medigap plans (like the kind AARP offers), Medicaid, state-based options and local facilities that provide “reduced priced care”.
- The warning label that pops up for insurance searches in 45 states says, “A quick note about individual insurance: Unless you live in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Vermont, or Maine, be aware that the current marketplace creates several challenges for the consumer.”
 - The five states listed are those with guaranteed-issue, a state requirement that health plans must guarantee coverage to all individuals who apply regardless of their health.
 - The statement is certainly biased against states (and as usual insurers) that do not mandate guaranteed-issue. While it is true that coverage may not be guaranteed through the individual insurance market, the webpages that contain this statement fail to contain any follow up statements about other available options in these states or why the state has chosen to not mandate guaranteed-issue.
- Under the timeline provided by the Administration, there is a graphic of a briefcase overflowing with money, labeled “Stopping Overpayments to Big Insurance Companies” accompanied by a slide titled “Addressing Overpayments to Big Insurance Companies and Strengthening Medicare Advantage.”

- Not only is the graphic over the top in its vilification of insurers, but it fails to be accompanied by information from their own [CMS Actuary](#) warning that more than half of seniors will lose access to their Medicare Advantage plans due to ObamaCare.
- The website claims, under the “[Strengthening Medicare](#)” tab “The life of the Medicare Trust Fund will be extended to at least 2029, a 12-year extension...” In addition to being completely false, the website fails to mention that massive Medicare cuts are the reason behind their claim.
 - These new cuts are not being used to improve the program’s solvency, but instead are being used to offset the massive new entitlement spending and government programs.
 - According to their own [Actuary](#), “in practice, the improved HI financing cannot be simultaneously used to finance other Federal outlays and to extend the trust fund, despite the appearance of this result.” The truth is either you’re extending the life of Medicare or you’re paying for the bill. You can’t claim both and [CBO](#) agrees.

Items that were noticeably left off the HealthCare.gov web portal but certainly fall under the definition of “consumer education” include:

- No references to tax increases (among other negative aspects of ObamaCare) on the timeline.
- No warning that consumers should stay away from high costs plans or be subject to the “Cadillac Tax.”
- No mention that there will not be enough funding for the new high risk pools to run through 2014 – as both [CBO](#) and [CMS](#) have found.
- No warning under the “Understand the New Law” tab that over [51% of employees](#) will be in plans without “grandfathered” status, as employers will be forced to change their plans to comply with ObamaCare.
- No information about private entities that offer assistance in picking a personalized plan, such as certified state-licensed independent insurance agents and brokers.
- No information about providers that still take Medicaid and/or Medicare (similar to how private insurers currently provide information on what providers are in-network).
- No information about or restrictions being placed on Health Savings Accounts (HSAs), Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRAs), etc through ObamaCare.

To read this and other misinformation for yourself, go to HealthCare.gov here: <http://www.healthcare.gov/index.html>.