

Insurance & Financial Advisor

NJAHU calls 'Sicko' a 'totally biased look' at health care, July 5, 2007

The New Jersey Association of Health Underwriters called the just-released documentary movie, *Sicko*, “a totally biased look at the U.S. health care system that damages the effort to create practical solutions.”

Michael Moore's latest movie has drawn heavy criticism from the health care industry.

NJAHU suggests that a task force be formed with all affected parties, who would work together to develop practical methods for improving health care.

“The last thing we need in the challenge to improve health care is a two-hour movie editorial that supports the agenda of one man—producer Michael Moore—hell bent on convincing everyone that universal health care is the only answer,” said Nicole Gunia, NJAHU president.

“Nobody is denying that our health care system needs fixing, but let’s put some key facts on the table,” said Gunia. “The U.S. health care system has the highest satisfaction rating of any nation.

Plus, citizens of countries with universal health care pay 50% or more in taxes—and sometimes wait several months before crucial surgery.”

Gunia pointed out that the unfortunate cases depicted in the movie, where people were denied health insurance based on pre-existing conditions, couldn’t happen in the Garden State. “Nobody in New Jersey can be denied health insurance based on prior medical conditions,” she said. “And we call upon other states to follow New Jersey and enact similar legislation to protect consumers.”

One of the problems depicted in the movie was that people did not understand some of the intricacies of their health insurance plans, said Gunia. “We encourage people to read their health plan contracts and ask for explanations from their insurance brokers or their insurance carriers.

The broker serves as an advocate and can alleviate most of the frustrating red tape in getting a claim paid.” Gunia added that in the vast majority of cases, purchasing health insurance through a broker does not cost any more than it would if purchased directly.

Gunia called upon the state of New Jersey to develop a task force represented by all affected parties, including physicians, hospital executives, patient advocacy groups, small business owners, insurance carriers and insurance brokers.

“It’s the only way to develop real solutions,” Gunia said.