

## ***SICKO***

One purpose of the film *SICKO* is to get some of the facts out to the American people about the things that are wrong with U.S. health care. Michael Moore points out that wealthy stakeholders make huge investments to maintain a status quo which supports excessive industry profits instead of meeting our health care needs. His premise is that, because of those special interests, sometimes we are left with information that simply is not true.

Affordable health care for everyone is referenced in a variety of ways in the film, depending on the country being highlighted, or the perspective of the person speaking. In the U.S. the terms often are used interchangeably and incorrectly, especially when we hear reports on the Town Hall Meetings or listen to the political pundits.

Here are the different kinds of insurance referenced in the film and used in dialog about healthcare. When analyzing facts for your paper, be sure these definitions are clear to you.

**Universal Health Care** – very simply... a health system designed to guarantee that everyone has access to quality health care which is comprehensive and affordable (All industrialized democracies except the U.S. have some sort of Universal Health Care.)

**National Health Insurance** – insurance coverage provided by a nation that guarantees health care for all of its citizens, regardless of whether the health care is provided by government-employed health professionals (England) or private practitioners (France, Canada)

**Socialized Medicine (National Health Service)** – a health system in which health care providers are government employees, health care facilities are run by the government and the government pays for health care services. (England; The United States Veteran Affairs Administration . . . YES! We already have socialized medicine!!!)

**Single Payer Health System** - a financing mechanism for health care delivery in which a single fund reimburses the providers of health services. (Canada; TRICARE (for active and retired military and dependents), Medicare and Medicaid;. . . , YES! We already have Single Payer!) Note: A Single Payer health system is *not* an insurance system.

Another concept has lately been advanced:

**Healthcare Cooperatives** – while yet to be clearly defined, a cooperative by definition is a jointly owned commercial enterprise (in the U.S., commonly organized by farmers or consumers) that produces and distributes goods and services and is run for the benefit of its owners