

How To Reduce Medical Bills

(DM)—No matter how much you paid for health care in the last year, you probably think it's too much. And you're not alone.

Fact is, our nation's doctors—among others—believe the cost of care in America is too high.

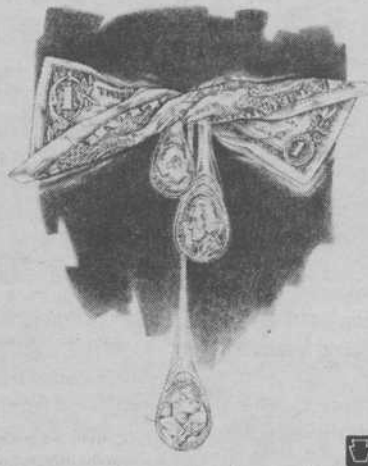
Two factors that contribute to high costs are professional liability insurance and defensive medicine—a term used to describe tests and procedures performed only to protect physicians in the event of a lawsuit. According to some estimates, the outrageous cost of doctor's liability insurance, plus the costs of extra tests and procedures performed only to avoid liability claims, add an extra 15 percent to the average physician's bill. By some estimates, defensive medical procedures cost Americans between \$15 and \$20 billion, yet they are of no benefit to patients.

And, in essence, a system designed to protect the few who are injured as a result of malpractice is hurting all of us.

Justice For All

Fortunately, there is a solution. The solution is to allow victims of malpractice to pursue claims, without making the rest of us pay the price. This idea is part of a proposal for reform called Health Access America, developed by the American Medical Association (AMA) with patients' needs in mind.

Health Access America would



put an end to defensive medicine. Along with strategies for reducing medical costs, Health Access America includes plans to widen access to care, and broaden employer-sponsored health insurance.

What You Can Do

There is no such thing as a cents-off coupon for our nation's medical system. But there can be a way to reduce the increased cost of care.

It begins with finding out about the Health Access America proposal. For your copy, write to Dr. Jim Todd, Dept. 6003, American Medical Association, 515 N. State Street, Chicago, IL 60610.

EOB TREATMENT CENTER REBUILDS

The Economic Opportunity Board of Clark County announces the near completion of its Substance Abuse "Treatment Center" building at 522 West Washington. The building was one of those destroyed by fire during the April 30, 1992 riot in West Las Vegas following the not guilty verdict in the trial of 4 Los Angeles police officers accused of beating Rodney King. The Treatment Center building is the first of burned out buildings on the Westside to be completely rebuilt from the ground. The reopening date is targeted for early December.

Since the fire, the Treatment Center's services have continued. Persons needing help with alcohol and drug abuse problems have been served non-stop by the center's staff at various temporary locations. According

to Cheryl Sonnenberg, the EOB Treatment Center administrator, "The destruction of the building has shown staff that they are the Treatment Center and that giving treatment does not require a special place, just special people." The Center's staff and clients had to make many personal and professional adjustments after the fire and during the time the building was being rebuilt. EOB Central Administration staff worked diligently to overcome the bureaucracies of paperwork, negotiations and contracts. During the rebuilding process, services to residential, outpatient and women's transitional clients have continued without interruption.

At the reopening, both staff and clients will be available to talk about their experiences, and how it was coping with substance

abuse treatment during the time after the devastating fire. They also will talk about their hopes and expectations in the new buildings. For more information, please call Cheryl Sonnenberg, at 646-5850.

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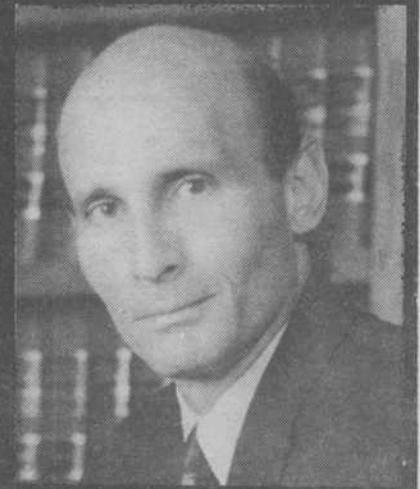
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