

ObamaCare Clusterfuck: Randomly varying access to care, depending on whether you live in New Hampshire, or its neighbor, Vermont

Submitted by [lambert](#) on Mon, 01/20/2014 - 11:55pm

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Narrow networks again! [Boston Globe](#) ^[3]:

[A]s new coverage begins this month, most policies sold through the insurance marketplaces offer some type of restricted hospital network in exchange for lower premiums.

Nowhere is the impact on patients and hospitals as extreme as in New Hampshire, say health policy analysts, because of the lack of alternatives to Anthem's strict [monopoly] network.

Of the state's 26 hospitals, 10 are excluded from Anthem's network. ...

Residents of the state capital, Concord, are also forced to travel, because the hospital in that city declined to join the network. They must drive 18 miles south to Manchester.

And Sullivan County ? in the west central part of the state, which spans some of the New Hampshire's most economically depressed towns ? has no hospital in the network.

Consumers must buy coverage through the insurance marketplace in order to receive government subsidies. In New Hampshire, where there is no competition, the narrow network applies to all of Anthem's insurance plans for individuals and small businesses.

?Obamacare was sold to Americans with the president saying you don't have to change your doctor. But in New Hampshire, with the way that the insurance company and the state has allowed it to roll out, that's simply not true,? said Peter Wright, chief executive of Valley Regional Hospital in Claremont, a Sullivan County hospital excluded from the network.

And now the key point:

The patchwork nature of how the health care law alters markets is illustrated by the differences with neighboring Vermont.

Blue Cross Blue Shield operates as a nonprofit in Vermont, where every hospital is included in the network ? including Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital in New Hampshire.

?If I lived across the river in Canaan, Vt., I would have access but if I lived in Colebrook where the hospital is actually located, I would not have access,? [Charles White, chief administrative officer of Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital] said. ?It makes no sense.?

So, if you live in New Hampshire, you go to Pain City. If you live in Vermont, you go to Happyville. How can ObamaCare (and its advocates) justify treating New Hampshireites as second-class citizens, and Vermonters as first-class citizens? Because markets!



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