



New Episode of “Prescriptions for Health Reform” Available At BlueCrossFoundation.org

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SEPTEMBER 18, 2009 — Dan Perrin predicts that national health reform will ultimately be a victim of political mishandling: “God bless the health care community,” he says in the latest “Prescriptions for Health Reform” podcast from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, “but they are so driven by their policy desires that they ignore this political stuff and every time, it beats them. Every time.”

Perrin, co-author with J. Patrick Rooney of *America’s Health Care Crisis Solved: Money-Saving Solutions, Coverage for Everyone*, says reform is enormously difficult because of politics, and change must be limited to simply getting coverage for the 47 million who currently lack insurance:

- **How the history of past reform efforts points toward failure once more:** “[T]wo-thirds of it [Tom Daschle’s book, *Critical: What We Can Do About the Health Care Crisis*] is a history of health care reform in this country. He takes it all back to the beginning of the 1900s. The short answer is “no.” That’s where the American history of reform of health care has been. It’s been “no,” and it’s been “no” for decades. There are some notable exceptions, Medicare and Medicaid, and the Medicare drug program, but even a small, relatively thin slice targeted plan like that just barely passed. So from my perspective, I think the Democrats have completely mishandled a great opportunity, and are going to lose, badly..”
- **The lessons from the Clinton Administration have not been learned:** “There’s so much talk about the real reason Hillarycare didn’t work was because the White House forced it on the Congress. It had nothing to do with that. That was a symptom of this entire effort to enforce value decisions on other people, in this case, value decisions about what sort of health care they should have. Americans don’t like that. They really don’t like it.”

Read the [transcript](#) or listen to the [podcast](#).

New episodes of "Prescriptions for Health Reform" are uploaded every two weeks at BlueCrossFoundation.org; they are also available via free subscription from iTunes. Grantmakers in Health recently [highlighted](#) the podcast series in a resource list of what health care foundations are doing to educate and inform those involved in the national health care debate. Past episodes of "Prescriptions for Health Reform" feature interviews with Shannon Brownlee, author of *Overtreated: Why Too Much Medicine is Making Americans Sicker and Poorer*; Dr. Jerome Groopman, author of *How Doctors Think*; and Melody Petersen, author of *Our Daily Meds*.

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More About The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation

The mission of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation is to expand access to health care. Through grants and policy initiatives, the Foundation works with public and private organizations to broaden health coverage and reduce barriers to care. It focuses on developing measurable and sustainable solutions that benefit uninsured, vulnerable and low-income individuals and families in the Commonwealth, and served as a catalyst for the pioneering Massachusetts health care reform law passed in 2006. The Foundation was founded in 2001 with an initial endowment of \$55 million from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. The Foundation operates separately from the company and is governed by its own 18-member Board of Directors. It is one of the largest private health philanthropies in New England and in 2007 was awarded the Paul Ylvisaker Award for Public Policy Engagement by the Council on Foundations.