



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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HEALTH CARE - CRITERIA FOR REFORM Adopted by the US Catholic Conference June, 1993

We believe reform of the health care system which is truly fundamental and enduring must be rooted in values which reflect the essential dignity of each person, ensure that basic human rights are protected, and recognize the unique needs and claims of the poor. We commend to the leaders of our nation the following criteria for reform:

- *Respect for Life.* Whether it preserves and enhances the sanctity and dignity of human life from conception to natural death.
- *Priority Concern for the Poor.* Whether it gives special priority to meeting the most pressing health care needs of the poor and underserved, insuring that they receive quality health services.
- *Universal Access.* Whether it provides ready universal access to comprehensive health care for every person living in the United States.
- *Comprehensive Benefits.* Whether it provides comprehensive benefits sufficient to maintain and promote good health, to provide preventive care, to treat disease, injury, and disability appropriately, and to care for persons who are chronically ill or dying.
- *Pluralism.* Whether it allows and encourages the involvement of the public and private sectors, including the voluntary, religious, and non-profit sectors, in the delivery of care and services; and whether it ensures respect for religious and ethical values in the delivery of health care for consumers and for individual and institutional providers.
- *Quality.* Whether it promotes the development of processes and standards that will help to achieve quality and equity in health services, in the training of providers, and in the informed participation of consumers in decision-making on health care.

- *Cost Containment and Controls.* Whether it creates effective cost containment measures that reduce waste, inefficiency, and unnecessary care; measures that control rising costs of competition, commercialism, and administration; and measures that provide incentives to individuals and providers for effective and economical use of limited resources.
- *Equitable Financing.* Whether it assures society's obligation to finance universal access to comprehensive health care in an equitable fashion, based on ability to pay; and whether proposed cost-sharing arrangements are designed to avoid creating barriers to effective care for the poor and vulnerable.