**Lesson - Week Five Part 2**

**Health Care Policy**

Now we move on to healthcare policy.  In chapter 8, Kraft “examines some of the problems associated with health care services and the public policies designed to ensure that citizens have access to them, and at a reasonable cost.” (Kraft, 2013, p. 277)

Let's start our discussion by examining the institutions and other actors involved:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Federal | State | Local | Private |
| HHS | Medicaid & SCHIP | city/county hospitals and clinics | Fee-for-service:  (1) Physicians  (2) Hospitals  (3) Nursing homes |
| FDA | state hospitals | public health dept. & sanitation |
| NIH | state mental institutes | emergency services |
| CDC | state medical schools | city/county health & human service programs |
| VA | state dept. of health | Insurance Firms:  (1) HMO’s  (2) PPO’s |
| USDA | health education |
| EPA | depts. of agriculture, environment & consumer protection |

 What are the major US health care programs?

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| Medicare = federal   * part A: core, hospital charges * part B: physicians, outpatient services * part C: choice, joint managed plan * part D: prescription drugs |
| Medicaid = federal/state |
| SCHIP = federal/state |
| Veteran Health |
| portability – HIPPAA & COBRA |
| patients’ rights - ERISA |

Kraft discusses several options for reducing health care costs.  “If managed care has not succeeded in restraining the rise in health care costs, other strategies may emerge to reach that goal.” (Kraft, 2015, p. 285)

* Increased utilization of HMO’s and PPO’s to manage costs
* Expanded State-level innovations
* Additional costs passed on to the health care consumer
* Better management of chronic disease
* Greater emphasis on preventative health care

We close the discussion of health care policy by considering the issues with quality.  Kraft mentions that while there are several issues with quality in care, the key issue is “physicians and state medical associations find it difficult to discipline colleagues who may be guilty of malpractice.” (Kraft, 2013, p. 308)