



Professional Enrichment Course

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Office of Medical Education

PEC Registrar – Denise Downs ddowns@pitt.edu 412-648-8749

Course Name: Health Policy

Enrollment Period:	Spring 2022
Course Dates:	6 Sessions on Tuesdays from 5:30-6:30 pm on: 1/11/22, 2/1/22, 2/15/22, 3/1/22, 3/29/22, 4/5/22
Student Max:	15
Class Year:	MS1
Course Director:	Howard Degenholtz, PhD (howard.degenholtz@pitt.edu) Allison DeKosky, MD (dekoskyas@upmc.edu)
Course Administrator:	Health Policy Advisory Board (HPAB@pitt.edu)
Location:	Scaife Hall, Small Group Rooms TBD
Registration:	Via Amp Up – Registration open date will be announced via email
Course Description:	This course is designed to give medical students an introduction to U.S. Health Policy and an understanding of how the policies and procedures of the healthcare system will impact their careers as physicians. Topics include an overview of the U.S. healthcare system, including public and private payment systems, comparative health policy, local policy initiatives in Allegheny County, pharmaceutical regulation and policy, and a discussion of the current state of healthcare reform in America and how physicians and medical students can advocate for change.
Objectives:	See below
Pre-Requisites:	None
Requirements:	Attend all sessions
Texts:	None

Health Policy Professional Enrichment Course

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine 2021-22

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Assistance with course vision:	Dr. Loren Roth
Course Administrator:	Health Policy Advisory Board (HPAB) Students
Course Funder:	OMED/HPAB

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Session 1: Intro to U.S. Health Policy

This session will provide an understanding of our current health policy system and how this system came to be. We will discuss historical events that led to the creation of the current system and how our current system influences care in America. We will discuss some unique features of our healthcare system such as employer-based healthcare and the array of public versus private payment plans.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify historical events that shaped our current healthcare system.
2. Identify the major payers and stakeholders in our current healthcare system.
3. Understand and be able to define concepts such as: premium, deductible, copay, HMO, PPO, long-term care facility.
4. Understand how our current healthcare system influences health outcomes.

Session 2: Comparative Health Policy

This session will compare and contrast the American healthcare system with systems of healthcare delivery and financing in other nations. We will explore the differences in cost, efficacy, and health outcomes resulting from different healthcare models.

Learning Objectives:

1. Compare and contrast the health care payment structures, costs, quality, and patient experiences between the United States and other industrialized nations.

Session 3: Local Health Care Policy

This session will provide students with an understanding of healthcare policies within Allegheny County and Western Pennsylvania. This session will also showcase the importance of local advocacy and action.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify health policy challenges within Western Pennsylvania that may impact the patients we directly care for as medical students.
2. Understand the work of the Allegheny County Health Department and other local organizations and nonprofits working in local healthcare policy.

Session 4: Pharmaceutical Pricing

This session will discuss the regulation of the pharmaceutical industry and the role of different stakeholders in determining drug pricing. Students will learn about the costs associated with developing and producing drugs and different methods of price control and regulation. They will also learn about the role physicians/medical students can play in advocating for affordable drugs.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the steps involved in bringing a new therapy from basic science to market.
2. Learn how drug prices are determined and how hospitals/insurance companies play a role in this process.
3. Identify factors that contribute to rising pharmaceutical costs.
4. Identify strategies for physician advocacy surrounding the rising costs of prescription drugs.

Session 5: Healthcare Reform

We will discuss the current state of healthcare reform in America, starting with an overview of the factors that shaped our current system - from the establishment of Medicare to the Affordable Care Act. Using this as a background, we will compare current healthcare reform proposals, attempting to understand what each proposal really means, how it would impact the way that patients receive care, and how it might change the way physicians practice and are reimbursed.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify major pieces of legislation that have brought about significant changes in our healthcare system.
2. Compare current proposals for healthcare reform, such as single payer, public option, Medicare for All (and others).

Session 6: Physicians' Roles in the Healthcare Landscape

Having gained an understanding of the landscape of healthcare reform in Session 5, students will spend the final session learning how physicians can play a role in health care reform. We will discuss how physicians can help their patients better navigate the healthcare system, and also ways that medical providers can advocate for changes in healthcare policy.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify ways that physicians can help patients navigate the healthcare system.
2. Identify ways that physicians can advocate for healthcare reform (i.e. joining professional organizations, serving on policy boards, meeting with local legislators).
3. Learn the basics of hands-on advocacy skills, such as writing letters to the editor and calling legislators.