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## QuickPoint! – Direct Primary Care Puts Patients First, Lowers Health Care Costs

By Justus Armstrong

Could forgoing health insurance make health care more affordable? That's the approach taken by many physicians practicing direct primary care, or DPC, an emerging medical movement that seeks to cut out the middleman and put patients first. Instead of billing insurance for individual services, physicians charge a regular fee as low as \$60 a month directly to patients, increasing patient access and letting doctors focus on quality of office visits over quantity. Under a direct primary care model, your doctor is more available, with easier appointment scheduling and direct access to medical advice via phone, text, or email. A better doctor-patient relationship allows more personalized care, and research into DPC has yet to find a single instance of malpractice.

Health care without a third party brings entrepreneurship to medicine and saves patients money. While most direct primary care providers recommend patients carry a high-deductible insurance plan to protect against emergencies, taking insurance out of the equation for regular medical expenses allows physicians to reduce their overhead and provide better quality at a lower price.

Oregon is home to many direct care facilities; but current law requires direct providers to obtain a separate license through the state insurance agency, making direct primary care unnecessarily difficult. Let's get rid of the red tape and take health care in a new direction.

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