



FREE MARKET

MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Good morning everyone! Make sure to check out this great article in [The Journal Record](#), by OCPA's President calling for lawmakers to protect direct care arrangements between doctors and patients.

Free Market Friday: Protect patients and doctors (to read the original article click [HERE](#))

By: Michael C. Carnuccio

During the upcoming legislative session, policymakers will address numerous issues. Health care policy needs their attention.

In Oklahoma and across the country, despite the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, health care costs are still growing and consuming more of family, employer and government budgets. Including the legislation, administrative regulations and related documents, Obamacare exceeds thousands of pages. Yet when addressing their health care needs, citizens still feel overwhelmed. People feel like just a number and not a name, continuing to see rising costs and having to endure the hassles of bureaucracy and a middleman – yet for many procedures none is needed.

Oklahoma is receiving national attention for a growing number of doctors, employers and patients who are turning to the solution of direct care arrangements so that people can trust they will be affordably cared for, not just covered.

Dr. Jeff Davenport owns One Focus Medical in Edmond. Davenport is a primary care physician who, like so many other doctors, was frustrated about how the current typical approach to receiving and purchasing health care was resulting in him not being able to give his patients what they needed. Davenport decided he was going to leave the typical large health care system and offer for a set fee per month, primary care services. The response has been outstanding. Davenport's practice is growing and numerous doctors across the region and country are structuring their practices similarly. Davenport's patients have told him that these arrangements are saving them, cumulatively, thousands of dollars in deductible, co-pay and other unnecessary costs. Patients are still maintaining insurance coverage, but using it for appropriate and unplanned higher cost medical needs.

But something threatens these efforts. Those opposed to these innovations are trying to have such arrangements declared insurance, which must be regulated by state insurance departments. These attacks are an absurd violation of the relationship between doctors and their patients and must be stopped.

To protect against such a violation of individual rights, Louisiana enacted statutory protections for direct care arrangements between doctors, patients and employers. Doctors like Davenport are saving patients thousands, providing high-quality care and making procuring health care possible again for many. Oklahoma lawmakers must protect direct care arrangements between doctors and their patients.

Michael C. Carnuccio serves as president of the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs (www.ocpathink.org).