

The problem with high health care deductibles

By Margot Sanger-Katz, New York Times

When Bernie Sanders released his long-awaited health care plan last month, it was light on the details. But it did include one major, crowd-pleasing promise: Under his Medicare-for-all proposal, no American would ever have to pay a deductible or co-payment to receive health care again.

Deductibles and other forms of cost-sharing have been creeping up in the United States since the late 1990s. A typical employer health plan now asks an individual to pay more than \$1,000 out of pocket before coverage kicks in for most services. The most popular plans on the Affordable Care Act exchanges require customers to pay several times as much. Even Medicare charges deductibles.

People tend to hate these features, but they were not devised to be cruel. Rather, they were fashioned with economic theory in mind.

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