

An Old Family Doc's Views On **DIRECT PRIMARY CARE**

Zion HealthShare has been a proud sponsor of the annual Direct Primary Care Summit organized by American Academy of Family Physicians. I am very proud to be a 30-year member of the AAFP, an organization with the foresight, compassion, and dedication to be at the forefront of the DPC movement, and to help physicians practice medicine in the most beneficial and rewarding way for themselves and their patients.



As a board member of the fastest-growing, highest-rated HealthShare in the country, I have had the opportunity to work with multiple direct primary care practices across the country. Time and time again, I have affirmed that we share the common goal of improving healthcare for the individual and the community.

I think that most of you reading this message know that the US healthcare system is broken and needs a major overhaul. A single-payer system is not the answer. Current congressional actions are trying to dissolve monopolies in business and prevent hospital mergers out of fear of cost increases through competition elimination. Unfortunately, we can see these efforts have done little to make real, lasting change to give power back to us, the healthcare consumer.

In an article in the Wall Street Journal titled “Hospitals Often Charge Uninsured People the Highest Prices, New Data Show,” the authors describe the cost discrepancies, even at the same facilities, for the same procedures.

As healthcare consumers, we can't help but be confused and mistrustful of the system as it exists today. Over the last 30 years of my medical career, I am sad to say that I have not seen much change for the better – until the Direct Primary Care movement (and, of course, the establishment of Zion HealthShare!). Finally, the healthcare consumer has been given back the power they (we) deserve!

When I opened my first practice in 1996, my dream was to be the small-town, family doc – do house calls, deliver babies and care for them as adults, work on the barter system, and have time with my family. It didn't take long for my dream to come crashing down. With increasing healthcare delivery costs, governmental and insurance restrictions and regulations, and decreasing reimbursements, the healthcare system simply did not allow me to practice in the way I thought was best for my patients and honestly what my patients wanted. A DPC practice would have allowed me to be the doctor I wanted to be. The DPC model is the way to not only care for patients in a compassionate, unhurried, and personal fashion but also to provide the perfect practice environment without the regulations and restrictions that are unnecessarily restrictive and expensive, ultimately leading to patient and physician dissatisfaction and promoting physician burn-out.

I applaud the DPC providers and the patients who choose them. Zion HealthShare is honored to support DPCs and be a part of your overall healthcare solution. May the journey we take together be safe, happy, and fulfilling.



Dr. Jeff Lee
Board Member