Social Problems 16th edition Seccombe Test Bank

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CHAPTER 2

PROBLEMS OF HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Which of the following are among the key indicators of how well a society is providing health care for its population?
   a. the number of hospitals and the number of hospital administrators
   b. life span and the size of the 65-year-old part of the population
   c. the number of medical schools and the number of physicians
   d. life expectancy and infant mortality

   Answer: d
   Topic: Health Care as a Global Social Problem
   Learning Objective 2.1: Describe health care as a global social problem.
   Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
   Difficulty Level: Moderate

2. When one compares life expectancy and related indicators between developed and less developed countries, one finds that the less developed countries have _____.
   a. a longer life expectancy
   b. higher rates of infant mortality
   c. lower rates of mortality for children aged 1–4 years
   d. a longer life expectancy for men, but not for women

   Answer: b
   Topic: Health Care as a Global Social Problem
   Learning Objective 2.1: Describe health care as a global social problem.
   Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
   Difficulty Level: Easy

3. The average age to which members of a society live is the measure called _____.
   a. life mortality span
   b. longevity span
   c. life expectancy
   d. infant mortality rate

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Answer: c
Topic: Health Care as a Global Social Problem
Learning Objective 2.1: Describe health care as a global social problem.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Easy

4. Which of the following statements best explains the differences in life expectancy between "developed" and less developed nations?
   a. More war occurs in developed nations.
   b. People in more developed nations are more likely to survive childhood diseases and parasites.
   c. Modern medicine isn't used in less developed nations.
   d. There are more famines in less developed nations.

   Answer: b
   Topic: Health Care as a Global Social Problem
   Learning Objective 2.1: Describe health care as a global social problem.
   Skill Level: Analyze It
   Difficulty Level: Moderate

5. Some women in less developed countries develop a fistula. When is this most likely to occur?
   a. when they give birth
   b. when they reach adolescence
   c. when they marry
   d. when their genitals are cut

   Answer: a
   Topic: Health Care as a Global Social Problem
   Learning Objective 2.1: Describe health care as a global social problem.
   Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
   Difficulty Level: Easy

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6. According to the text, in the United States our comparatively poor health is largely due to _____.
   a. high birth rates and high life expectancy
   b. the limited number of healthcare professionals available in rural areas
   c. the emergence of new and deadly epidemics
   d. growing inequality and lifestyle problems

   Answer: d
   Topic: The Scope of Health Care Problems in America
   Learning Objective 2.2: Identify the scope of health care problems in America.
   Skill Level: Analyze It
   Difficulty Level: Moderate

7. Nora is a sociologist who teaches and does research on social inequality in access to health care. This specialty is called _____.
   a. organizational
   b. health-care sociology
   c. medical sociology
   d. incident sociology

   Answer: c
   Topic: The Scope of Health Care Problems in America
   Learning Objective 2.2: Identify the scope of health care problems in America.
   Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
   Difficulty Level: Easy

8. Which of the following issues do sociologists find most likely affect access to health care?
   a. the personal characteristics of the individual
   b. the time at which the illness strikes
   c. the occupation aspired to by the person
   d. social inequality

   Answer: d
   Topic: The Scope of Health Care Problems in America
   Learning Objective 2.2: Identify the scope of health care problems in America.
   Skill Level: Analyze It
   Difficulty Level: Moderate

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9. Medical sociologists often point out that health care institutions themselves are the source of many problems we associate with health in the United States because _____.
   a. health care never developed as a purely competitive industry or regulated public service
   b. clinicians ignored the contributions of medical sociologists during the nineteenth century when the health care field developed
   c. health care institutions perpetuate racial inequality
   d. health care institutions have refused to treat fistulas

   Answer: a
   Topic: The Scope of Health Care Problems in America
   Learning Objective 2.2: Identify the scope of health care problems in America.
   Skill Level: Analyze It
   Difficulty Level: Difficult

10. In the past, most doctors were generalists. Over time some doctors began to develop narrow specialties and to refer patients to hospitals with special facilities. This practice caused _____.
   a. Americans to look to Canada to provide medical services
   b. employers to begin offering health insurance
   c. medical sociologists to study the health care field
   d. family doctors and preventive medical practices to suffer

   Answer: d
   Topic: The Scope of Health Care Problems in America
   Learning Objective 2.2: Identify the scope of health care problems in America.
   Skill Level: Analyze It
   Difficulty Level: Difficult

11. The text points out that in 2016, _____million Americans under age 65 did not have health insurance, which represents a _____ since 2010.
   a. 32 million; a decline
   b. 45 million; an increase
   c. 59 million; a decline
   d. 66 million; an increase

   Answer: a
   Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
   Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
   Skill Level: Remember the Facts
   Difficulty Level: Moderate

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12. Which of the following statements about health insurance in the United States is true?
    a. By the 1920s, Americans began to equate health insurance with employment: you get a job and you get insurance.
    b. As health care costs began to rise substantially in the 1960s, large businesses began to be concerned about costs and started dropping health insurance for their workers, while smaller firms continued to provide insurance.
    c. Only about 53 percent of workplace firms offer health insurance to employees.
    d. The cost of health insurance is rolled into taxes.

    Answer: c
    Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
    Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
    Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
    Difficulty Level: Difficult

13. Martin, a high school student, does not have health insurance. Which of the following best describes Martin's family?
    a. Martin's parents are over 65.
    b. Martin's parents are both unemployed.
    c. Martin's parents are white.
    d. Martin's parents have an income below the poverty line.

    Answer: c
    Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
    Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
    Skill Level: Apply What You Know
    Difficulty Level: Moderate

14. When the health status of blacks and whites are compared, the data show _____.
    a. white males live about five years longer than do black males, although there is no racial differences among females
    b. blacks are more likely than whites to rate their own health as fair or poor
    c. the infant mortality for blacks is about the same as for whites, but life expectancy is lower
    d. blacks are more likely to receive treatment for illnesses like heart disease, breast cancer, and HIV than are whites because they are more likely to have Medicaid, and whites are more likely to be uninsured

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Answer: b
Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
Skill Level: Analyze It
Difficulty Level: Difficult

15. Damien was injured in a car accident, and after receiving medical care, he received a bill for $12,500. What type of health care system is he under?
    a. fee-for-service
    b. national health system
    c. private medicine
    d. single payer

    Answer: a
    Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
    Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
    Skill Level: Apply What You Know
    Difficulty Level: Easy

16. When did health insurance start as a fringe benefit associated with employment?
    a. immediately after the Civil War
    b. in the 1960s under President Kennedy
    c. in the 1920s during the Progressive Era
    d. during World War II

    Answer: d
    Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
    Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
    Skill Level: Remember the Facts
    Difficulty Level: Easy

17. You are writing a term paper about the importance of insurance. You have learned that, compared with those who have insurance, people without health insurance _____.
    a. are twice as likely to postpone seeking medical care and over four times as likely to forgo needed care
    b. are able to receive charity care from the hospital, but the care is not as thorough
    c. are less likely after an accidental injury to receive any care and are ten times as likely to receive no recommended follow-up care
    d. are less likely to be in debt or file bankruptcy

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Answer: a
Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
Skill Level: Apply What You Know
Difficulty Level: Difficult

18. Most people without health insurance _____.
a. live in families in which at least one member is employed
b. live below the poverty line
c. are over the age of 65
d. are Hispanic

Answer: a
Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
Skill Level: Analyze It
Difficulty Level: Moderate

19. In 2017, expenditures on health care in the United States amounted to about _____ per person.
a. $4,500
b. $6,200
c. $10,500
d. $11,900

Answer: c
Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Remember the Facts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

20. Roughly what portion of people WITH health insurance report that they find it difficult to afford the cost of health insurance each month, the copays for doctor visits and prescription drugs, and the deductibles paid for care after the insurance kicks in?
a. 15 to 20 percent
b. 30 to 40 percent
c. 70 to 80 percent
d. 100 percent

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Answer: b
Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

21. Recently, increases in the costs of hospital care have slowed, because _____.
    a. there are more for-profit hospitals offering lower cost care
    b. fewer people are becoming ill and needing hospitalization
    c. the population is younger and needs less hospitalization
    d. of improvements in the efficiency of hospital administration brought on by legislation.

Answer: d
Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Analyze It
Difficulty Level: Moderate

22. What are the top two most expensive services, according to the data on national health expenditures?
    a. hospital care and physician services
    b. prescription drugs and nursing care facilities
    c. malpractice insurance and prescription drugs
    d. physician services and prescription drugs

Answer: a
Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Remember the Facts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

23. The Hastings Institute, a non-partisan health research organization, claims that _____ is responsible for at least 40 to 50 percent of the annual rise in health care costs.
    a. prescription drugs
    b. medical technologies
    c. malpractice insurance increases
    d. the building of new hospitals

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Answer: b
Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Remember the Facts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

24. The primary demographic factor influencing the cost of health care is _____.
a. the increase of upper-class citizens with plenty of money to pay
b. the aging population
c. women who exert a strong influence on national issues
d. the increase in factory workers with dangerous jobs

Answer: b
Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

25. Today, about _____ percent of Americans age 20 and older are overweight.
a. 36
b. 53
c. 71
d. 86

Answer: c
Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Remember the Facts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

26. Fareen has a BMI of 32, which means that she is classified as _____.
a. underweight
b. obese
c. overweight
d. the correct weight

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Answer: b
Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Remember the Facts
Difficulty Level: Easy

27. With respect to smoking, _____.
    a. the first report on the health consequences of smoking was released in 1952 by the tobacco companies, indicating that smoking helps cure the common cold
    b. smoking is the leading high-risk behavior associated with poor health and early death
    c. the share of the adult population who smoke has remained steady since the first report on smoking and health was released
    d. males are twice as likely to smoke as are females

    Answer: b
    Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
    Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
    Skill Level: Analyze It
    Difficulty Level: Difficult

28. Chris smokes cigarettes. Which of the following most likely represents Chris' demographic characteristics?
    a. Black; male; lives in the Northeast United States
    b. Hispanic; age 18–24; below poverty level
    c. American Indian/Alaska Native; age 25–64; lives in the Midwest
    d. White; age 18–25; lives in the South

    Answer: c
    Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
    Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
    Skill Level: Remember the Facts
    Difficulty Level: Moderate

29. The painless killing of a patient suffering from a terminal illness or irreversible coma is called _____.
    a. advance directive
    b. euthanasia
    c. end of life care (ELC)
    d. Medicare

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Answer: b
Topic: Ethical Issues
Learning Objective 2.5: Summarize the ethical issues surrounding health care.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Easy

30. Physician-assisted suicide is a type of _____.
a. euthanasia
b. advance directive
c. ACA
d. health care proxy

Answer: a
Topic: Ethical Issues
Learning Objective 2.5: Summarize the ethical issues surrounding health care.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Easy

31. An advance directive contains two components. The first is a living will. The second is _____.
a. a written statement that explains the patient's wishes with respect to medical care
b. a plan for assisted suicide submitted to the state
c. a health care proxy
d. privacy documents

Answer: c
Topic: Ethical Issues
Learning Objective 2.5: Summarize the ethical issues surrounding health care.
Skill Level: Apply What You Know
Difficulty Level: Moderate

32. Hadad and his spouse have decided that they need an advance directive, which means _____.
a. they are going on the Medicare program
b. they have prepared a written statement outlining their wishes for medical care
c. they are going on Medicaid to augment their Medicare
d. they have purchased long-term care insurance

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Answer: b
Topic: Ethical Issues
Learning Objective 2.5: Summarize the ethical issues surrounding health care.
Skill Level: Apply What You Know
Difficulty Level: Moderate

33. As more outpatient clinics are managed by for-profit corporations, they are more likely to be concerned about earning money and less concerned with providing medical care for those patients who are less likely to be able to pay. This point of view represents which theoretical perspective?
a. symbolic interaction
b. conflict
c. functionalist
d. generalist

Answer: b
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

34. Which theoretical perspective would most likely argue that poverty promotes poor health in a variety of ways, such as lacking the money to purchase a nutritious diet or a safe living environment?
a. symbolic interaction
b. functionalist
c. open concept
d. conflict

Answer: d
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

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35. Sociologists who view health care problems from a conflict perspective tend to focus on _____.
a. tensions associated with social class
b. cultural factors
c. the effects of institutions
d advance directives

Answer: a
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Easy

36. The functionalist perspective argues that a consumer (patient) is not in a position to shop for medical treatment the way one shops for other products or services because the consumer cannot evaluate the need for treatment. This refers to the issue of _____.
a. product uncertainty
b. restricted entry
c. misallocated supply
d. information

Answer: d
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

37. The functionalist perspective argues that a consumer does not have sufficient knowledge to judge the effectiveness of sophisticated treatments. This refers to the issue of _____.
a. product uncertainty
b. misallocated supply
c. lack of price competition
d. restricted entry

Answer: a
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

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38. The functionalist argument that many health-care services that are restricted to physicians could be performed by trained technicians refers to the issue of _____.
a. norms of treatment
b. professional dominance
c. lack of price competition
d. misallocated supply

Answer: b
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

39. The functionalist argument that an abundance of specialists encourages the use of expensive and sophisticated treatments when simpler ones would be just as effective refers to the issue of _____.
a. professional dominance
b. restricted entry
c. information
d. misallocated supply

Answer: d
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

40. Interactionist studies of the health of Americans point out that many of the "bad habits" like smoking and drinking alcohol that can contribute to poor health are due to _____.
a. the addictive properties of the substances themselves
b. lack of willpower among those who are not healthy
c. how consumption norms reflect a need or desire to be sociable
d. differences in social power among people

Answer: c
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

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41. Julio is studying the social aspects of new students at his college's orientation program. He notes the different ways that students behave when they are do not yet know other students. Julio is likely to be using what perspective in his study?
a. interactionist
b. functionalist
c. conflict
d. generalist

Answer: a
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Apply What You Know
Difficulty Level: Moderate

42. Which theoretical perspective would be most likely to focus on the way communications, such as advertising images and messages, seek to influence our health-related behaviors?.
a. interactionist
b. functionalist
c. conflict
d. generalist

Answer: a
Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

43. Which U.S. president is responsible for developing the Affordable Care Act?.
a. President Trump
b. President Clinton
c. President Obama
d. President Nixon

Answer: c
Topic: Social Policy
Learning Objective 2.7: Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
Skill Level: Remember the Facts
Difficulty Level: Easy

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44. What is the nickname of the ACA?
    a. Medicaid
    b. Medicare
    c. Reversed care
    d. Obamacare

    Answer: d
    Topic: Social Policy
    Learning Objective 2.7: Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
    Skill Level: Remember the Facts
    Difficulty Level: Easy

45. What are the two primary issues that prompted debate about what to do with the U.S. health care system, leading to reform?
    a. Health care costs were increasing faster than the rate of inflation; the number of physicans was declining.
    b. The U.S. life expectancy was decreasing; the number of uninsured was increasing.
    c. Health care costs were increasing faster than the rate of inflation; the number of uninsured was increasing.
    d. Rural hospitals were closing; most working adults lacked health insurance from their employer.

    Answer: c
    Topic: Social Policy
    Learning Objective 2.7: Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
    Skill Level: Analyze It
    Difficulty Level: Moderate

46. Identify a key feature of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
    a. A fine is imposed upon anyone who is not covered by health insurance.
    b. People with pre-existing conditions, except for cancer, can no longer be denied health insurance coverage.
    c. Preventative care carries only a $26 charge.
    d. Students can now stay on their parents' health insurance plan until they are age 22.

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Answer: a
Topic: Social Policy
Learning Objective 2.7: Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
Skill Level: Analyze It
Difficulty Level: Moderate

47. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was passed in what year?
a. 1965
b. 1975
c. 1996
d. 2010

Answer: d
Topic: Social Policy
Learning Objective 2.7: Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Easy

48. The Affordable Care Act _____.
a. is a single-payer system
b. offers a subsidy from the federal government to those people who cannot afford to purchase insurance
c. mandates that employers must offer health insurance to their workers
d. requires all citizens over age 30 to have health insurance

Answer: b
Topic: Social Policy
Learning Objective 2.7: Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

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49. According to recent research, what is a key reason that the ACA is unpopular among certain groups, even though those groups may actually benefit from the ACA??
    a. Many people believe that they cannot choose their own doctor
    b. Many people are not aware that the ACA and Obamacare are the same thing.
    c. The ACA is seen as welfare, which tends to be stigmatized
    d. The ACA was created under President Bill Clinton, and many Republicans have great hostility toward the Clintons.

    Answer: b
    Topic: Social Policy
    Learning Objective 2.7: Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
    Skill Level: Analyze It
    Difficulty Level: Moderate

50. Which is the best example of a single-payer system in the United States?
    a. Medicaid
    b. the ACA
    c. Medicare
    d. fee-for-service

    Answer: c
    Topic: Social Policy
    Learning Objective 2.7: Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
    Skill Level: Apply What You Know
    Difficulty Level: Easy

ESSAY

51. Describe two key standard measures of health. Using these, compare the health of those persons in less developed countries to those persons in developed countries. To what may we attribute these differences?

    Answer: The ideal answer should include:
    1. Infant mortality is the number of deaths in the first year of life.
    2. Life expectancy is how long a person can expect to live, usually calculated from birth.
    3. Students can use information from Table 2-1.

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Topic: Health Care as a Global Social Problem
Learning Objective 2.1: Describe health care as a global social problem.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

52. The U.S. has relatively poor health compared to other countries. What two factors largely account for this? Provide at least two specific examples from the text for each factor.

Answer: The ideas answer should include:
1. Growing inequality
2. Lifestyle problems
3. Students should provide two specific examples of each.

Topic: The Scope of Health Care Problems in America
Learning Objective 2.2: Identify the scope of health care problems in America.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

53. Describe the structure and history of America's fee-for-service health care system.

Answer: The ideas answer should include:
1. Fee-for-service system means that the individual must pay for medical care and the cost is not rolled into taxes.
2. During WWII, health insurance was offered as a fringe benefit.
3. By 1950s and 1960s, health insurance was firmly tied to employment.
4. By 1970s, health insurance costs began to climb, and small businesses were the first to stop providing health insurance.
5. Today only 53 percent of firms offer insurance to employees.

Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
Skill Level: Apply What You Know
Difficulty Level: Moderate

54. A major problem in the United States health-care system is unequal access to health care due to lack of health insurance. Which groups in the population have limited access to health insurance? What are the consequences of being uninsured?

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Answer: The ideal answer should include:
1. Who are the uninsured? Use data from Figure 2-2 (work status, income, race/ethnicity).
2. Uninsured are twice as likely to postpone seeking care, over four times as likely to forgo care, and more than twice as likely to have a prescription go unfilled.
3. Paying for health care reduces money for other necessities. Medical bills contribute to debt and bankruptcy.
4. After an accident, the uninsured are twice as likely to receive no follow-up care, and are less likely to fully recover.

Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
Skill Level: Analyze It
Difficulty Level: Moderate

55. Discuss the racial/ethnic inequalities surrounding health and access to health care.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:
1. Race or ethnicity: Use data from Figure 2-3 (racial differences in life expectancy, infant mortality, and self-reported health).
2. Race or ethnicity: Racial differences in treatment for heart disease, asthma, breast cancer, HIV, nursing home care.
3. Low social class may compound race and ethnic differences.

Topic: Unequal Access to Health Care
Learning Objective 2.3: Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

56. Rising health-care costs have been an important problem in the United States. Describe the major factors that contribute to these cost increases.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:
1. Hospitals
2. Physicians
3. Malpractice
4. Medical technology
5. Prescription drugs
6. Demographic factors
7. Cultural factors, such as obesity and smoking

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Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

57. Obesity and smoking are two cultural issues that affect the rising cost of health care. Choose one of these issues and write an essay describing its prevalence, and its contribution to poor health and rising health care costs.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:
1. Obesity: BMI, reasons for obesity, health impacts, early death, costs
2. Smoking: Surgeon General's report and tobacco companies response, health impacts, early death, who is most likely to smoke (Table2-3), use by youth

Topic: The High Cost of Health Care
Learning Objective 2.4: Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.
Skill Level: Analyze It
Difficulty Level: Moderate

58. What is euthanasia? Summarize the issues surrounding end-of-life ethical concerns.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:
1. Euthanasia
2. Physician-assisted suicide
3. Advance directive

Topic: Ethical Issues
Learning Objective 2.5: Summarize the ethical issues surrounding health care.
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty Level: Moderate

59. Compare and contrast the three sociological approaches to explain health care problems.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:
1. Conflict theory: results of tensions usually associated with class
2. Functionalist perspective: focus on institutions
3. Interactionist perspective: focus on cultural issues, including communication

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Topic: Explanations of Health Care Problems
Learning Objective 2.6: Classify explanations for health care problems.
Skill Level: Analyze It
Difficulty Level: Moderate

60. Describe the Affordable Care Act (ACA), including its key components. What has happened to the ACA in the last few years under President Trump's administration?

Answer: The ideal answer should include:
1. Created in 2010 by President Obama, nicknamed "Obamacare".
2. Has reduced the number of people without insurance.
3. Components outlined in Table 2-4.
4. President Trump wants to repeal the ACA but was unsuccessful in Congress. Instead, chiseled away some of its features such as mandate.

Topic: Social Policy
Learning Objective 2.7: Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
Skill Level: Apply What You Know
Difficulty Level: Moderate

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2

PROBLEMS OF HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

2.1 Describe health care as a global social problem.

2.2 Identify the scope of health care problems in America.

2.3 Discuss Americans' unequal access to health care.

2.4 Review the reasons for the high costs of health care.

2.5 Summarize the ethical issues surrounding health care.

2.6 Classify explanations for health care problems.

2.7 Identify key issues in social policy, including the Affordable Care Act.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Health care presents a variety of social problems to all the world's societies. Affluent countries face problems with equal access while impoverished countries must deal with infectious diseases, high infant/maternal mortality rates, low life expectancies, scarce medical personnel, and inadequate water/sewer systems.

In 2010 the U.S. Congress passed a historic new health care program known as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), commonly nicknamed Obamacare. The program promised to cover millions of Americans who were currently uninsured with affordable health insurance. However, in 2018, under the administration of President Trump, many of the policies embedded in the ACA have been stripped away, and the number of people without health insurance is now expected to grow. Access to health care is a global social problem. In many countries, families face a lack of access to high-quality medical care that leads to social problems, including high rates of infant and

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maternal health, the rapid spread of infectious diseases, and lower life expectancy compared with more developed nations. Although many developing countries have seen improvements in health care, most experts agree there is more to do to reduce inequality in health care delivery in poorer nations. One example of this is the fistulas that sometimes occur when women have obstructed labor during childbirth.

The United States largely has a fee-for-service system. This system distributes costs among employers, individuals, and the government. Access to care is shaped by race, class, and gender. Nonwhites, the poor, and women are adversely affected by lack of access to high-quality health care: each of these groups experiences more health problems due to a lack of insurance and poverty. Unequal access is related to the cost of obtaining it. High costs are related to declining personal income, dwindling government resources, new drugs and technologies, risky behaviors, and increased physician specialization. Much of the increase is due to increases in the cost of prescription drugs; however, cultural factors related to lifestyle, such as obesity, smoking, bad diet, sedentary lifestyle, and risky behaviors, are also factors. Increased costs have led to a tendency to shift costs to the public and to churn insurance policies so as to avoid liability for risky patients. Public health insurance, such as Medicaid and Medicare, helps the poor and elderly, but many millions have no coverage at all because they do not earn enough to pay for it despite working full-time. While Medicare is designed to cover health care costs for the elderly, it does not cover the cost of prescriptions or nursing home care. Medicaid only covers costs for the very poor. Medicare/Medicaid programs are expensive and are subject to many rules, making them unappealing to many doctors. The Affordable Care Act is designed to help alleviate some of this disparity.

As medical technology has improved and life-prolonging procedures have become more available and dependable, many complex ethical issues have arisen. For example, some new technologies, such as heart and kidney transplants, are extremely costly and cannot be provided to all patients who might benefit from them. Thus, the question arises of how to choose the patients who will undergo these procedures. Also, few aspects of health care are as fraught with emotion and confusion as those dealing with how and under what circumstances loved ones die.

The three major theoretical perspectives offer different explanations for health care problems. Conflict theorists stress the role that capitalism and pursuit of profit play in creating problems of access. The poor are more likely to be weak due to inadequate diet and are more likely to be exposed to unhealthy environments. Recent trends suggest that less-profitable patients may not receive treatment. Functionalists, who are opposed to treating health care as a commodity, examine features of health care institutions to see how they might be changed to improve the situation. Interactionists focus on lifestyle issues, and patterns of sociability. Smoking creates the most pervasive lifestyle problems: approximately 1,100 deaths per day are attributed to smoking.

Health care is distributed very unevenly in the United States, with wealthier families getting better medical care. At the same time, as people get older, they tend to suffer from more chronic illnesses, and their ability to pay for medical costs decreases. The current

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crisis in the U.S. medical care system is significantly worsened by a large-scale retreat from employer-provided health insurance. Concerns have emerged over age and cultural differences linked to obesity, smoking, and risky behavior, especially among the younger generation. Meanwhile the baby boomer cohort is aging, living longer, and many are poor, likely resulting in higher health care costs.

All developed nations are having difficulty coping with the demands on their health care systems. None of them has found easy solution. But in the United States—as compared to Canada, France, Germany, England, and the Scandinavian nations—there is an even greater lag in arriving at reforms of health care institutions that address the major problems. The ACA was designed to bring health insurance to millions of people, and despite its success in that, the program remained somewhat controversial, with Republicans vowing to repeal it; a chant that became especially pronounced during the 2016 Presidential election. "Repeal and Replace" was the Republican slogan, although it was not clear what the ACA was supposed to be replaced with. One reason for the unpopularity of the ACA is that many people do not know that Obamacare and the ACA are the same thing. Although the ACA does not include a public insurance option like Medicare that would be available to all, it includes provisions that extend health benefits to an additional 32 million citizens. This chapter includes a review of the key provisions of the bill.

LECTURE OUTLINE

I. Health Care as a Global Social Problem

- A. Lack of adequate health care is a social problem faced by all countries
  - 1. In westernized countries problems with physical health involve:
    - a) Unequal access to health care
    - b) Higher health care costs
- B. In developing countries, problems are more pronounced and involve:
  - 1. High infant mortality
    - a) Reduced significantly between 1970 and 2017, but still very high
    - b) Related to a decline in breastfeeding, inadequate sanitation and health facilities, poor maternal health, and lack of prenatal care
  - 2. Low life expectancy
    - a) Has increased significantly between 1970 and 2017, but still low
    - b) May not survive childhood diseases and parasites
  - 3. Fistulas

II. The Scope of Health Care Problems in America

- A. The health of Americans is relatively poor compared to peer developed nations
  - 1. Relatively poor health is related to growing inequality and lifestyle problems

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2. Also related to the type of medical care that is, or is not, available

B. Medical sociology is a subfield that specializes in research on the health care system and its impact on the public
   1. Access to health care
   2. Health care institutions
   3. Public health measures and consequences
   4. Medical personnel

III. Unequal Access to Health Care

A. Peak number of uninsured occurred in 2010, but since then the number has declined because of the Affordable Care Act

B. United States has a fee-for-service system, in which patients are expected to pay for medical care; the cost is not rolled into taxes
   1. Fee for service began after World War II
   2. By 1950s and 1060s people began to equate health insurance with employment
   3. By 1970s and 1980s the cost of medical care began rapidly rising, and small firms began to drop health care coverage
   4. People don't purchase insurance themselves because it is too expensive

C. The profile of the uninsured includes:
   1. Most are employed
   2. Most live above the poverty line
   3. All race and ethnic groups, and nearly half are white
      a) Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Natives have poorer health, overall
      b) Lower income have poorer health, overall

IV. The High Cost of Health Care

A. Unequal access to health care related to recent increases in cost
   1. An increasing number of people say that they find it difficult to afford insurance, copays, and deductibles
   2. Consequences to the high costs include medical debt, damaged credit, depleted savings and other assets, housing instability and stress

B. Hospitals
   1. In the past, insurance companies could set any price they wanted and had little incentive to keep costs down
   2. Recently, the rate of increase in hospital costs have slowed somewhat
      a) Shortened hospital stays
      b) More second opinions
      c) Greater use of nonhospital providers

C. Physicians
   1. Shortage of physicians in rural areas

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2. More specialties increase costs because they have higher incomes
3. Specialization means that people see more doctors, increasing costs

D. Malpractice litigation has become more frequent
E. Medical technology
1. Technology is expensive to purchase and operate
2. Technology is overused
F. Increase in number of and use of prescription drugs
1. Amount of money spent on prescription drugs in the United States exceeds that of all other countries
2. Drug costs are higher because federal government does not negotiate prices
G. Demographic factors
1. Aging of the population means more costs
2. Large baby boomer cohort includes many poor who cannot afford health care and rely on the government
H. Cultural factors
1. Obesity
2. Smoking
3. Risky behaviors

V. Ethical Issues

A. End-of-life issues
1. Who decides who has the "right to die"?
2. State legislative changes allow euthanasia in some U.S. states
3. Advance directive is a written statement that explains the patient's wishes for medical care

VI. Explanations of Health Care Problems

A. Conflict perspective
1. Views health problems as inherent in the capitalist system
2. Poor receive less care, which is often inadequate
B. Structural-functionalist perspective
1. Focus on health care as an institution
2. United States uses a marketplace approach
3. Canada uses universal or "single payer" approach
C. Social interactionist perspective
1. Looks at behavior patterns associated with sociability and interaction among people in groups, such as what we eat, drink, or smoke.
2. Focuses on how people are socialized to engage in poor health behaviors

VII. Social Policy

A. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) passed in 2010
1. The ACA is the first major overhaul of the U.S. health care system since the creation of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965

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2. The number of uninsured people has declined substantially since then
3. Program remains controversial
    a) Many people do not know that Obamacare and the ACA are the same thing
    b) Republicans vowed to repeal the ACA, but have been dismantling it

B. Some people are suggesting that the United States should move to a single-payer system that is financed by taxes and covers the costs of essential health care services

LECTURE SUGGESTIONS, DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, AND CLASS EXERCISES

1. Invite a representative of a local public health department to speak to the class. Have them present information on which health problems are most pressing in your community.

2. According to the text, diseases like diabetes are in part due to lifestyle choices. Invite a diabetic dietician to speak on the dangers of diabetes, and the difficulties associated with changing the eating habits of those with the disease.

3. Invite a representative of your local American Cancer Society to speak on preventive health measures and current research on cancer.

4. Have students investigate how many physicians in your community accept Medicaid and Medicare patients. Physician advertisements in the Yellow Pages may provide some clues to which physicians accept what types of insurance. Or, students can be divided into groups to contact doctors' offices to see what insurance is accepted.

5. In this activity, students will investigate and report on diseases like leprosy, river blindness, guinea worm, and other infectious diseases that are unknown in the developing world. Divide students into groups to visit the World Health Organization website to learn about diseases in the developing nations.

6. Make a list of some common prescriptions that the elderly or a sick child might be taking. Have students contact a local pharmacy to find out what the prices are for these prescriptions for those who do not have insurance. Students can be placed in groups to research different drugs or get prices from different sources. Have students discuss how they would deal with a situation in which they needed to purchase a prescription, but did not have the money.
7. Have students explore the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation website for the latest data on U.S. and global health care policy, funding, and polls. Be sure to click on the menu to see the list of topics. Individual students or teams of students

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can be assigned an article or fact sheet to present to the class.

8. Ask students if any of them have had a health issue in their family that was exacerbated by not having health insurance (or having inadequate insurance). If they are willing, ask them to share their story with the class.

SUGGESTED WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Discuss health care as a global social problem. What problems face the developed nations as opposed to the developing nations?

2. Describe the field of medical sociology. How do medical sociologists analyze health care issues?

3. Describe how race, ethnicity, social class, and gender affect access to health care in the United States.

4. Describe the current state of health care costs. What will likely happen if these costs continue to rise? Who will be hurt the most?

5. Discuss the factors that influence the cost of health care in the United States. What would happen if the United States began to stress preventative health measures in the public school system?

6. Obesity and smoking are two cultural issues that affect the rising cost of health care. Choose one of these issues and write an essay describing its prevalence, and its contribution to poor health and rising health care costs.

7. Summarize the ethics surrounding end-of-life issues.

8. Describe how each of the major theoretical perspectives approaches health care problems. Give specific examples that illustrate each perspective.

9. Assume that you are a functionalist. How would you change the major health care institutions in the United States?

10. Identify one or more members of your own family and think about the health problems they have. How do lifestyle choices and interactional patterns contribute to these problems?

11. Should health care be treated as a commodity or as a basic right (as is public education)? Be prepared to defend your point of view.

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REVEL RESOURCES

Current Event Bulletin
Watch: The Basics Health and Medicine
Table 2–1 Health Indicators for Selected Nations, 1970–2017
Life Expectancy in Global Perspective
Watch: Erasing the Pain and Taboo of Fistulas
Watch: Health Insurance Explained: The YouToons Have it Covered
Figure 2–2 Characteristics of the Non-Elderly Uninsured
Watch: Thinking Like a Psychologist: Health and Medicine
Obesity
Table 2–3 Who Is Most Likely to Smoke?
Watch: Health of the Health Care System
Survey: How Do You View the U.S. Health Care System?

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