

From: Jacobs, Chris (RPC)
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Subject: Democrat Plans Rationing with Open Eyes

From Montana this week comes [word](#) that its Governor, Brian Schweitzer, wants to establish a government-run health care plan in his state. The governor said he “has completely different plans for the Medicare and Medicaid money the federal government gives the state,” and that he wants to “create a state-run system that borrows from the program used in Saskatchewan.” He then went on to explain how his government-run system might keep taxpayer spending on health care low:

[Schweitzer] said the Canadian province [i.e., Saskatchewan] controls cost by negotiating drug prices and **limiting non-emergency procedures such as MRIs.**

A simple web search about waiting times in Saskatchewan yields information about the types of “non-emergency procedures” subject to rationing in the province; for instance, the list of “[Wait List FAQs](#)” from the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency includes this helpful guidance ***for cancer patients***:

What are you doing to ensure that I get an appointment in a timely way?

Currently we have a shortage of medical oncologists that is impacting our wait times. We are also actively recruiting to fill our vacant positions throughout our facilities and are working to bring in locums to help address wait times....

Can I get care sooner if I go somewhere else?

You will find that wait times exist in the healthcare system throughout Canada and in other countries as well....

And when it comes to the MRI example Governor Schweitzer referenced, rationing occurs there as well – unless you’re politically connected. Saskatchewan Rough Riders – i.e., players in the Canadian Football League – [have been able to jump the long queues](#) for MRIs in the province by paying for their own treatment; other people can wait for as long as three months.

Details on how Governor Schweitzer intends to turn Montana into a Canadian-style health care system are not yet known. However, given that Schweitzer’s application will be reviewed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services – whose head, Donald Berwick, has spoken of [rationing with our eyes open](#) – it’s quite possible the application will be approved. In that scenario, those who can afford to get to the head of the queue – [millionaires and billionaires](#) who can fund the entire cost of their treatment, and pro athletes like [Michael Vick](#) – will receive in a prompt fashion the MRIs and cancer care they need to maintain or regain their health. Everyone else, perhaps not.

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