Health System Promotes HMO Medicare

Welcome to the Health Freedom Minute. This is Twila Brase, president of Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom.

A woman gave me a letter listing all the Medicare plans accepted by the clinic system she uses.

Medicare HMO plans topped the list. Last on the list was “Original Medicare.” Original Medicare is regular Medicare which allows patients to go wherever and to whomever they wish. It pays doctors for each medical service performed.

The clinic letter says, “[Our system] accepts original Medicare, however we strongly encourage you to select a contracted Medicare product that is administered and managed by a local or national health plan.” That’s some rather strong HMO advertising.

The question is why? Medicare HMOs get more taxpayer dollars per enrollee. Could it be that Medicare HMOs, which limit patient choices, actually pay hospitals and doctors more?

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