

# Palzewicz campaign: America spends more but gets less healthcare benefit

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**Brookfield, WI** - Americans always like to get the most “bang for the buck,” because it’s just smart to get as much as you can out of your hard-earned money. But when it comes to healthcare costs, the United States spends nearly twice as much as other industrialized countries, yet has the lowest life expectancy and highest suicide rates. Democrat Tom Palzewicz, running for the Fifth Congressional District seat, wants to bring maximum value to our healthcare investment.

According to the Brookings Institute, the United States Spends 16.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on healthcare, which is twice as much as other Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) nations. More than one-quarter of U.S. adults report they have been diagnosed with two or more chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, or hypertension during their lifetime compared to 22 percent or less in all other countries. The U.S. has the highest amenable mortality rates among the 11 countries, with 112 deaths for every 100,000. Notably, the amenable mortality rate has dropped considerably since 2000 for every country, though less proportionately in the U.S. The U.S. rate was two times higher than in Switzerland, France, Norway, and Australia.

“In America, healthcare is still tied to employment, which is problematic on several levels,” said Palzewicz. “We need to move towards healthcare as a human right and not as an employment benefit. But I understand this will take great thought and careful planning. Cost containment will not take place until we take the profit motivation off the table. At present, insurance companies reimburse whatever the health provider ‘needs’. And some of these health providers have been charging three, four, or 5,000 for a COVID test. And the insurance companies are reimbursing

at that rate, which is ridiculous. That's profiteering.

"Cost containment and common sense solutions to the healthcare system are not radical, liberal ideas. They make common sense. The biggest challenge will be taking the profit motive out of the healthcare system and that's why it needs to be over a 10 year span. There's a lot of profit in the system. Those profits don't go to patient care, they go into the pockets of insurance executives. That money should go to backfill the investment through the single payer systems. We still need hospitals. We still need urgent care centers. We still need doctors offices. We still need the infrastructure of healthcare, but the infrastructure of healthcare cannot be dependent on profits anymore."

Palzewicz understands the country is in a pandemic now and can't afford another disruption in markets taking care of people. Unintended consequences need consideration.

"We need to move toward universal healthcare, but there are so many people who are happy with their healthcare and we don't want to stop that," said Palzewicz. "They'll be happier because the cost of healthcare will go down. But, we don't want to disrupt that part of the process. We want to start from that base and add people onto it without disrupting them and then be able to bring the costs of covering everybody down."

Healthcare costs are not going down, even though President Trump asserted that drug prices are dropping, and insulin is inexpensive, "like water." That is not true, as seniors on Medicare will attest, insulin is very expensive. Medicare reimbursement is an issue.

"There was a chart in the Journal-Sentinel that showed the local healthcare systems and what percent they charged for the current Medicare reimbursement rates. And it was anywhere from the lowest at 210% to the highest at 316%. Our healthcare systems are charging anywhere between two and three times the rate of the Medicare reimbursement. We need to find the real cost of service and bring charges down to the level of the Medicare reimbursement."

Bang-for-the-buck means cost containment, common sense, and a willingness to work toward the common good. Palzewicz is committed to reworking the healthcare system to work for everybody, not just those with a job or money.