

HEALTH RIGHTS HOTLINE

Reports Based on Hotline Data

Consumers in Managed Care – Problems, Solutions and Lessons Learned from the Health Rights Hotline, October 1998

The Health Rights Hotline released its first report documenting the experiences of 2,400 consumers who were helped by the Health Rights Hotline during the period from July 1997 through June 1998. *Consumers in Managed Care* was one of the first of its kind to provide a consumer's view of the managed health care system's need to improve. The report found that consumers were confused by a complex health care system and needed assistance to effectively get their needs met. The report offered advice to health plans and medical groups on how to reduce problems. For consumers, the report offered concrete steps on how to avoid problems and what to do if problems arose in particular areas.

Real Problems and Real Solutions – Making the Voices of Health Care Consumers Count, December 1998

The Hotline's second report examined 3,500 consumers' reported experiences with the health care system during the period from July 1998 through June 1999. *Real Problems and Real Solutions* documented problem rates by health plan and medical group, as well as by payer and plan type for the period between July 1998 and June 1999. In its second year, the Hotline found that over sixty percent (61%) of Hotline callers had not called their health plan prior to contacting the Health Rights Hotline primarily because they didn't know what to do. For the nearly forty percent (39%) of people who had contacted their health plan prior to calling the Hotline, about one-third (33%) disagreed with the health plan's decision and another third (31%) found the health plan to be unhelpful in resolving their problem.

When What's Ailing You Isn't Only Your Health – A Report on the Different Problems Experienced by Persons with Specific Health Conditions as They Navigate the Health Care System, September 2000

For its third report, the Hotline took a different approach to analyzing consumers' problems. *When What's Ailing You* summarized the problems disproportionately experienced by persons with specific health conditions and offered advice to consumers on how to avoid potential problems and what to do when problems arise. The report was based on data collected over a two-year period. A major finding was that, compared to all Hotline callers, individuals with certain health conditions face particular problems with the health care system at disproportionately higher rates. Persons with chronic health conditions such as cancer, diabetes, musculoskeletal conditions, respiratory conditions, neurological conditions and mental health conditions experience specific types of problems more frequently when trying to access health care.

The Impact of the Health Rights Hotline – Making a Difference for Health Care Consumers Through Direct Service, Advocacy and Systemic Change, June 2001

The Impact of the Health Rights Hotline provides a three-year retrospective on how the health care system in the four-county Sacramento area has functioned for consumers. The report shows that even with increased attention paid to managed care by the media and elected officials, consumer problems with the health care system remain virtually unchanged. Denials of care, inappropriate care and customer service issues continue to be the areas with which consumers experience the greatest degree of problems. The findings also included information on the severity of the problems reported by Hotline callers and the length of time it took for the problems to be resolved. The report also included feedback on Hotline callers' satisfaction with the Hotline's services and with the resolution of their problems.