



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on March 8, 2013

Doctor Offers Solutions for Healthcare — Without ObamaCare

While the Obama administration has been busy trying to [take over the nation's healthcare system](#) through ObamaCare — sparking soaring insurance premiums, exploding federal deficits, serious economic pain, and more problems to come — a leading medical professional has a [better idea](#). In an [exclusive video interview](#), [Dr. Alieta Eck](#), co-founder of the [Zarephath Health Center](#) and former president of the [Association of American Physicians and Surgeons](#), offered her prescription for real solutions to the nation's healthcare crisis. (The video is embedded at the end of this article.)



“Many people have thought that ObamaCare would be the answer to taking care of the poor, but this is just not the case,” explained Dr. Eck, a respected specialist in internal medicine based in New Jersey who knows how the system works and takes care of the poor at her free clinic. “All that ObamaCare will do is add layers and layers of more government bureaucracy on a healthcare system that is overburdened.”

The mandates and the meddling of the federal government on the physician-patient relationship, she added, will be a disaster. “Doctors are not going to be able to use their clinical judgment, they’re going to be asked to follow algorithms and structures set up by bureaucrats,” Dr. Eck explained. “Doctors won’t be able to have choices as to what they do for patients, and patients won’t have choices about what doctors they can see.”

Unlike most politicians in Washington, D.C., Dr. Eck actually understands healthcare and how it can best be delivered to the poor. Almost a decade ago, Dr. Eck and her husband, Dr. John Eck, founded the Zarephath Health Center, a clinic that offers free medical care to the poor using donated services and supplies. The center sees between 300 and 400 patients every month, making it a shining example of how healthcare services can be delivered to those in need without federal intervention or mandates.

“We started the Zarephath Health Center because we saw a need that wasn’t being met,” Dr. Eck told The John Birch Society in an interview as part of its ongoing [Choose Freedom — Stop ObamaCare](#) campaign promoting common-sense, free-market, constitutional solutions to healthcare. “We saw people who were very frustrated because they had the government insurance, but they couldn’t find a physician to take care of them.”

According to Dr. Eck, what the poor need is not more government insurance schemes — insurance is for protecting assets, she said. Instead, Dr. Eck explained, the poor need medical care and they need to know that there is a place for them to go when they get sick and have no money. “That’s what we’re there for,” she explained about her free clinic in New Jersey.



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Today, when the poor get sick — even with minor ailments — they are often forced to go to the hospital emergency room, handing taxpayers a giant and unnecessary bill. The average cost of such visits to the public is around \$1,000. Meanwhile, the federal government has set up a network of so-called “federally qualified health centers” that, while less expensive, also charge taxpayers a hefty sum.

“At our clinic, all with donated services — the physicians and nurses donating their time, and all the support services are donated — it’s only \$13 per patient visit, paid for by private donations with no taxpayer money,” Dr. Eck explained, adding that her clinic operates very efficiently and does not cost the public a dime. “The patients are just extremely grateful for what we can do for them.”

Many politicians across the country at all levels, and even some well-meaning citizens, believe that expanding Medicaid and government health-insurance schemes is the way to provide medical care for the poor who cannot afford it on their own. According to Dr. Eck, however, that idea is misguided for more than a few reasons.

“The Medicaid system is extremely broken,” she explained. “It is frustrating for both patients and physicians. Patients can’t find doctors who take it, and doctors won’t take it because the regulations and the paperwork are just overwhelming. The Medicaid system seems to be a huge misuse of taxpayer dollars.”

Citing a review of [state-level data](#) on government health insurance, Dr. Eck said that in New Jersey, the Medicaid budget is almost \$11 billion — about a third of the entire state budget. Delving deeper into the figures reveals that half of that amount goes to elder care. The remainder, \$5.4 billion, goes to acute care, which includes hospitals and outpatient facilities. Breaking down the numbers further shows about \$500 million of that acute-care budget goes to “administrators,” with just \$90 million for doctors, labs, and X-ray services.

“So, it frustrates the physicians, because so little resources are going to pay for them to be able to provide the medical care, which is the whole purpose of the Medicaid system in the first place,” Dr. Eck noted, echoing a [common sentiment among healthcare professionals](#). “The Medicaid system is not the solution, and expanding it would not provide more medical care.”

Dr. Eck and others like her — doctors on the front lines treating poor patients — believe that there is a better way to deal with the problem. The solution, she said, is expanding the number of free clinics set up and run by volunteers, not the government, all across the state, and eventually, the nation. Churches, civic groups, and others could all help to make that vision a reality. There is even a role for politicians, Dr. Eck added.

“We have an innovative solution to get more physicians to volunteer,” she said. “That would be to ask the state to cover the liability of any physician in their private practice who donates four hours a week in a non-government free clinic such as ours. This would increase the access to care for every specialty, it would provide a solution without involving the taxpayers, and it would save the taxpayers billions of dollars.”

Addressing potential concerns about access to medicine and drugs for the poor, Dr. Eck explained that, in her experience, pharmaceutical companies are “extremely generous.” At the Zarephath Health Center, for example, she is very aware of the costs, noting that the patients treated there have very few resources available to purchase medicine. Pharmaceutical firms, however, are more than willing to make donations, Dr. Eck noted.

“They care about real charity, they want to know that it’s going to take care of people who are in need,”



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she said about the numerous drug manufacturers and suppliers that regularly donate medicine to the needy. “The pharmaceutical companies are very interested in seeing that the poor get the care that they need.”

Lawmakers in New Jersey on both sides of the aisle, Dr. Eck added, have already expressed great interest in the approach used at her clinic. “We think this is an idea that should be expanded across the nation,” she said, urging those interested in monitoring the progress being made in New Jersey to visit [NJAAAPS.org](#). To find out about developments nationwide as the plan spreads, check out [AAPSONline.org](#).

“ObamaCare is not the solution, and expanding Medicaid is not the solution,” Dr. Eck concluded. “We need common-sense solutions. Our government is already spending way more than it takes in; and this cannot continue, so we believe that the free-clinic approach will be a much better idea.”

While the Supreme Court upheld most of the controversial statute in a widely criticized ruling, ObamaCare could be scrapped easily. Numerous states are [working to nullify the federal power grab](#), for example, in an effort to protect the rights of citizens while avoiding financial and medical disasters.

Alternatively, as more than a few members of Congress and activist organizations have suggested, the GOP-controlled House of Representatives could simply refuse to fund its implementation. Texas Republican Sen. Ted Cruz [announced](#) this week that he plans to do his best to cut off all funding for the implementation of ObamaCare, and more than a few lawmakers are ready to join the effort.

To learn more about the Choose Freedom — Stop ObamaCare campaign and how to get involved in advancing real solutions to healthcare, interested readers can visit [The John Birch Society’s website](#), which has a [special page dedicated just to the healthcare issue](#). The campaign provides educational material and resources citizens can use to help defeat ObamaCare and advance market solutions.

Additionally, those interested in helping the cause can join more than 70,000 citizens on Facebook who have “liked” the effort to [Choose Freedom — Stop ObamaCare](#). Clicking “like” will empower readers to stay informed on developments and strategies aimed at defeating the lawless federal takeover of the U.S. healthcare system. [According to the experts](#), doctors, patients, and taxpayers would all be better served by defeating ObamaCare and promoting real market reforms.

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