Greed, Gilead and the Corporatization of Health: Part 1

July 26, 2018 By Greg Jefferys

This is the first of a two part series.

The post below is something I have been meaning to complete for nearly 8 weeks now. I started writing it immediately after leaving Paris where I attended the 2018 EASL Conference. I guess I have been putting off writing this because it is a subject that fills me with disgust when I think about it.

I feel disgust because there are so many supposedly respectable people with their snouts in the Big Pharma money trough. People who are being paid to look after the best interests of their patients or the citizens of their countries. High ranking health bureaucrats, leading doctors in research hospitals, supposed health advocates and the rest of the rabble of self-interested, money driven hypocrites.

Harsh words, strong emotions… these are the reasons I have delayed completing this post. But today I received an email from a pensioner in the USA followed by a comment from a Hep C advocate in the U.K. These two things finally motivated me to complete this post. Let me share these two communications before you read the completed post:

From: Tim
Sent: Thursday, 5 July 2018 3:20 AM
To: gregjefferys
Subject: Hepatitis C Treatment “Thank you for your article”

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Message Body:
Dear Greg
I recently received word that Medicare would fund my Hepatitis C treatment, however when I noticed the actual price tag on my Harvoni I was so incensed that it’s cost is a small fortune, as I am a senior citizen on a fixed income, the cost was astounding.

Particularly knowing that my Medicare part D is footing the bill of Gilead’s greedy capitalistic endeavour, it sure makes me wish the government was more interested in consumer protection as they would be the only ones powerful enough to do something to stop this price gouging. Instead

of doing something to improve things they just bemoan the cost of caring for vulnerable populations. Thank u for your clarity on this issue, your work is valuable.
Tim

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Greg, last week in the UK it was announced that 17 procedures that are normally offered by the National Health Service would now only be available in “exceptional circumstances” . These include treating Carpel Tunnel syndrome and steroid injections for back problems. The harsh reality is that the drop in the value of the pound has combined with the insane prices that the NHS is paying Big Pharma for medication to almost bankrupt the NHS. When is someone going to do something? When is it going to change?

Click here to read the rest of Greg’s blog.

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