Government Health Careless

When I packed for an academic conference last week, I neglected to pack my cholesterol medicine. While the health benefits of statins can be debated, patients on statins are not supposed to abruptly stop taking them or miss taking them for multiple days. In a world devoid of government intervention in health care, my doctor would suggest I take statins (once I assure him that I want to eat bacon cheeseburgers with impunity), and I would go to a pharmacy and purchase them. If I forgot them for a trip, I would go to the store and buy more. Yet, this is not what happened last weekend.

I went to a nationwide pharmacy chain and asked to purchase my statin of choice. However, said statin cannot be found on the shelf because it requires a prescription. Someone, somewhere, must believe that people left to their own irrational self would abuse cholesterol medicine. I have never enjoyed taking cholesterol medicine, so I don’t know what the point would be of abusing it. Nevertheless, the government says that I cannot be trusted to buy three cholesterol pills, even though my doctor has clearly instructed me not to miss taking my medicine for days at a time.

I asked the pharmacist if I could purchase three days’ worth of my statin medicine. He looked into his computer and found that I have a prescription along with the correct dosage. At this point he knew that A - I take statins, B - what my correct dosage is, and C - that unless he sells them to me, I won’t be able to take them. Yet, he couldn’t fulfill my request. When said pharmacy chain stopped accepting my insurance January 1st, I transferred my prescription to a local pharmacy. Therefore, his computer, which held my prescription info, said my prescription was not active and could not be filled. It was Sunday so I couldn’t contact my doctor or my local pharmacy.

To recap: my doctor told me to take a drug. I agreed to take it. Government rules prevented me from taking it. In this case, the government actively enacted laws that could impair my health. Is the FDA there to protect us or to harm us? It is an open question. Is this a government I want to put in charge of all of health care? Will they serve my interests, the interests of insurance companies, taxpayers, government bureaucrats, all, or none of the above?

Under Obamacare, the federal government has decided to make sure that women won’t have any co-pays for contraception. Contraception won’t be free, but it will be at no marginal cost to them. That is, contraception that works by preventing implantation after fertilization, but doesn’t prevent the spread of STD’s, is mandated to be covered in the guise of health care, while other birth control methods which prevent fertilization (for those who actually believe that life begins at conception), or prevent the spread of STD’s, such as condoms, won’t be freely provided. Maybe free condoms didn’t poll as well as free birth control pills.

That is, government health care is about politics, not health. Private health care between doctors and patients, on the other hand, tends to be about health, not politics. When was the last time your doctor asked about your political views? To suggest that the government can do anything without the influence of politics is to disregard all historical evidence. There’s a reason they had to have bipartisan base closure committees. Even national defense is politicized. Therefore, it should be no surprise that government health care is more about politics than health. The idea trust a government with everyone’s health care stems from a love of government more than a love of healthcare – that is, unless you thought I was better off skipping my cholesterol medicine whilst I ate schnitzel.