



RIGHT CARE ACTION WEEK 2017: TAKING ACTION ON HEALTH CARE COSTS

BY THE NUMBERS

82

Total Events

26

States (And the first-ever international RCAW event in Thomazeau, Haiti!)

2,800

participants

150

new members recruited to the RCA

725

tweets with the hashtag #RCAW17 from

122

contributors, with

2.8 million

timeline impressions



For the last three years, Right Care Action Week has been an opportunity for clinicians, patients, students, and community members to come together and demonstrate what our health care system should look like.

This year, our goal was not just to organize individual events, but to facilitate **team building** among RCA members locally and emphasize **recruitment** around the topic of health care costs. We achieved this goal through targeted outreach, step-by-step guidance, and extensive social media marketing.

Although there were fewer events this year, many events were led by **regional teams** working together, providing a basis for **chapter-building** efforts, participation in social media, and a jumping-off point for our first **national campaign** around lowering medication prices.

Social Media

Our social media presence this year was extensive, including the first-ever RCAW tweet chat, daily [Facebook live videos](#), a [blog series](#) on drivers of health care costs, and [shareable evergreen material](#).



WHAT WORRIES YOU MOST ABOUT HEALTH CARE COSTS?



Resident physician in Dallas, TX
“I worry about future changes that would leave low-income patients without care.”



Nurse in Hyden, KY
“Costs keep rising. I worry about a new bill that impacts pre-existing conditions.”



Health care analyst in Omaha, NE
“I worry about my son being able to afford health care for himself or his family some day.”

Themes

This RCAW, we asked people what worried them the most about health care costs. We received a wide range of answers, with four main themes emerging on participants' concerns:

Health care is unaffordable. People are worried about high premiums, high deductibles, and the possibility of paying for a catastrophic illness or injury. Participants specifically mentioned struggling with the high costs of medications, long-term care, and uncovered costs such as dental care and mental health care.

Health care costs are out of control. Participants expressed worry that health care costs are not only too high, but that they are increasing at an alarming rate, with nothing to stop this growth. Participants were frustrated that the government is doing nothing about health care costs and many think that Medicare is unsustainable.

High costs make health care inaccessible. A prevalent theme among clinicians was the fear that costs were keeping patients from getting the care they need. Patients also mentioned delaying or skipping doctor appointments to avoid the cost. Even those with coverage worried about the most vulnerable Americans losing their access to care.

Health care costs threaten financial security. Many participants mentioned not being able to pay for necessities, or going into debt because of health care costs. Worries about future generations not being able to afford health care abounded.

Stories

WASHINGTON, DC

“How badly are you getting screwed by health care costs?” That’s the question members of Right Care DC asked during their listening booth event for Right Care Action Week. Eight members of RCDC held a listening booth at a local farmers market featuring a **giant papier-mache screw**. They prepared extensively for the event, holding weekly conference calls over a month and a half, conducting research on health care costs to create their own fact sheet, and building their 5-foot-tall papier-mache screw from scratch. The screw was an effective conversation starter, as were the clinicians’ white coats, and RCDC gained nearly **25 new recruits!** With RCAW over, they have still been meeting regularly to discuss booths and other farmers markets and events at local churches.





Resident physician in Dallas, TX

"I worry because our care is still poor."



CHICAGO, IL

For Selwyn Rogers, Johanna Ryan, and Art Curtis, Right Care Action Week was an opportunity to work together, **engage with community members**, and see whether a real Chicago chapter is viable. Their Right Care Town Hall event demonstrated that all of these goals were possible. They planned the event rigorously, conducting regular calls, **partnering with a local church**, and advertising their event in local media. The event included a diverse mix of clinicians, patients, and patient advocates, many of whom signed up to be a part of the RCA. Coming off the success of the Town Hall, the organizers are now planning follow-up meetings to turn their group into a **full-fledged chapter**.



Nursing student in Oshkosh, WI

"I worry about patients who need vital meds such as insulin and can't afford them."



Student in Alamosa, CO

"I worry that I'll be too poor"

ST. LOUIS, MO

At St. Louis University Hospital, both **students and clinicians** hosted RCAW events. Emergency medicine physicians Fred Buckhold, Dan Valentini, and Stephanie Cull gave patients cards printed with "What Worries You?" upon admission, asking them to share their answers on the cards. The cards were included in each patient's file, so the doctor treating them next understood not just their medical problems but their **social or financial concerns** as well. Meanwhile, a group of medical students set up a listening booth just outside the hospital, where they asked passers-by about their experiences with health care costs. These events offered opportunities for RCA members in St. Louis to hone their organizing skills and **start building a chapter**.

DALLAS, TX

Chief resident Arjun Gupta made a splash with his first RCAW event by getting **150 doctors** to participate – the most doctors to attend any RCAW event! He organized other residents at three different hospitals in the Dallas area and asked them to fill out "What Worries You" cards and discuss the answers. Unlike most "What Worries You" events, which ask patients about their concerns, this one **invited health care providers to share their worries**, which the stressed-out residents greatly appreciated. The RCAW event also helped identify doctors who wanted to get more involved in the movement, laying the groundwork for a new **potential chapter in Dallas**.



www.RightCareAlliance.org

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