CHAPTER 19

Policymaking for Health Care and the Environment

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Politics in Action: Health Care Crisis in the Medical Capital of the World (pp. 595–596)
   A. Health care and the environment both involve life-and-death decisions.
   B. Health care and the environment both involve sophisticated technologies.
   C. Health care and the environment both involve high costs.

II. Health Care Policy (pp. 596–606)
   A. The Health of Americans and the Cost of Health Care in America
      1. The United States does not rank as high as many countries in life expectancy and infant mortality.
      2. American health care costs are both staggering and soaring.
   B. Uneven Coverage, Uneven Care
      1. Health Insurance
         a. Health insurance is closely tied to age and race.
      2. Managed Care
         a. Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO) provide all or most of a person’s health care for a yearly fee.
   C. The Role of Government in Health Care
      1. Much medical research is financed through the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
      2. National health insurance is a proposal for a compulsory insurance program to finance all Americans' medical care.
      3. Medicare is part of the Social Security system and covers more than 38 million people.
      4. Medicaid is a program designed to provide health care for the poor.
   D. Policymaking for Health Care
      1. The Politics of Health Care
         a. Many interests are involved in health care policies (elderly, workers, business, and insurance companies).
      2. Two Presidents, Two Parties, Two Health Care Plans
   E. Health Policy: The Issues Ahead

III. Environmental Policy (pp. 606–609)
   A. Environmental Policies in America
      1. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the nation’s largest federal regulatory agency.
2. Clean Air
   a. The **Clean Air Act of 1970** charges the Department of Transportation with the responsibility of reducing automobile emissions.

3. Clean Water
   a. The **Water Pollution Control Act of 1972** is designed to control pollution in the nation's lakes and rivers.


5. Endangered Species

6. Toxic Wastes
   a. The **Superfund** was created to clean up toxic wastes by taxing chemical products.

III. Energy Policy (pp. 609–613)
   A. Energy Sources and Energy Politics
      1. Coal
      2. Oil
      3. Nuclear
   B. The Global Warming Debate: Beyond Kyoto?
      1. **Global warming**, a slow rise in the atmospheric temperature of the earth, results primarily from the burning of fossil fuels.
      2. The United States did not sign the Kyoto Treaty to reduce greenhouse gases.

V. Groups, Energy, and the Environment (pp. 613–614)

VI. Understanding Health Care and Environmental Policy (pp. 614–615)
   A. Democracy, Health Care, and Environmental Policy
   B. The Scope of Government and Health Care and Environmental Policy

VII. Summary (pp. 615–616)

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

*After studying Chapter 19, you should be able to:*

1. Explain the nature of health care and health care policy in the United States.

2. Discuss the issues surrounding the environment and the programs and policies to deal with them.

3. Understand the issues surrounding energy policy and global warming.

4. Understand the relationship between health and environmental policy and democracy and the scope of government.
The following exercises will help you meet these objectives:

Objective 1: Explain the nature of health care and health care policy in the United States.

1. How do life expectancy and infant mortality rates in the United States compare with those of other nations?
   
   Life Expectancy:

   Infant Mortality:

2. What is "defensive medicine"?

3. In what ways is access to health insurance unequal in the United States?

4. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of managed care?

5. What is the difference between Medicare and Medicaid?
   
   Medicare:

   Medicaid:
6. List and explain the involvement of three interest groups in health care policy.

1.

2.

3.

7. How did President George W. Bush’s health care reform proposals differ from President Clinton's?

8. Explain the major issues involved in the controversy over stem cell research.

Objective 2: Discuss the issues surrounding the environment and the programs and policies to deal with them.

1. What is the mission of the Environmental Protection Agency?


   Clean Air Act:

   Water Pollution Control Act:

   Endangered Species Act:

   Superfund:
Objective 3: Understand the issues surrounding energy policy and global warming.

1. What are the four most important sources of energy in the United States?
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.

2. What are the main problems for each of the following energy sources?
   Coal:
   Petroleum:
   Nuclear:

3. What are the main arguments against the 1997 treaty on global warming?

4. What has been the primary argument of opponents of strict environmental laws?

Objective 4: Understand the relationship between health and environmental policy and democracy and the scope of government.

1. Why are individual citizens rarely involved in policymaking for technological issues?

2. How have technological issues affected the scope of government?
KEY TERMS

Identify and describe:

health maintenance organizations (HMOs)

national health insurance

Medicare

Medicaid

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Clean Air Act of 1970

Water Pollution Control Act of 1972

Endangered Species Act of 1973

Superfund

global warming
Compare and contrast:

health maintenance organizations and national health insurance

national health insurance and Medicare

Medicare and Medicaid

Clean Air Act of 1970 and Water Pollution Control Act of 1972

Name that term:

1. This popular managed care system is designed to keep health care costs down.
   ______________________

2. This is our largest federal regulatory agency.
   ______________________

3. This law that requires the government to actively protect each of hundreds of species listed as endangered.
   ______________________

4. It is funded through taxes on chemical products.
   ______________________

5. This results primarily from the burning of fossil fuels—mainly coal and oil.
   ______________________
USING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Drawing from newspapers, newsmagazines, or the Internet, find some current cases where public policy may be affected in the areas of health, energy, and/or the environment. High-tech medicine and medical research may evoke ethical, policy, or legal questions concerning life itself. The need for cheap and abundant energy may pose a threat to the environment. Make a list of the issues involved in each case and how it was resolved. Identify the tradeoffs involved and who would benefit and suffer from the different policy options available. Who are the individuals and groups, in and out of government, most involved in the issue and how much influence do they have on policy decisions? Consider how your examples reflect the current agenda in each policy area.

2. Every project utilizing federal funds is required to submit to the government an environmental impact statement. Analyze an environmental impact statement and report on its contents. It may be particularly useful to examine an EIS on an energy project, such as a power plant. Pay particular attention to the numerous types of environmental impacts predicted by the statement. Compare the amount of attention paid to physiographic, biological, social, and economic impacts, and evaluate the sophistication of the analysis. Analyze the comment section of the statement and determine who commented on the proposal, what they said, and whether their views were incorporated into the body of the report. Identify the groups in favor of the project and those who opposed it. Find out whether the proposed project or policy was actually implemented.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Circle the correct answer:

1. ____ percent of the American population is uninsured.
   a. Ten
   b. Fifteen
   c. Twenty-five
   d. Thirty
   e. Forty

2. The health care system in the United States is driven by the
   a. market.
   b. notion that health care is a basic right of citizenship.
   c. understanding that health care is an entitlement.
   d. view that health care is a responsibility.
   e. government.
3. In 1970, we spent approximately ____ percent of our GDP on health care; today we spend about ___ percent of our GDP on health care.
   a. 5; 10
   b. 7; 15
   c. 10; 25
   d. 15; 15
   e. 2; 5

4. Which of the following countries does NOT provide universal health care for its citizens?
   a. Canada
   b. Germany
   c. Japan
   d. Great Britain
   e. None of the above

5. _______ is part of the Social Security system and covers 40 million American seniors with hospitalization insurance and other optional health insurance.
   a. Medicaid
   b. Medicare
   c. The National Institutes of Health
   d. The Superfund
   e. The United States Health Service

   a. $700,000
   b. $7,000,000
   c. $7 billion
   d. $7 trillion
   e. $70 trillion

7. The most common reason for losing health insurance is
   a. being poor
   b. losing or changing a job
   c. growing old
   d. having a child
   e. divorce

8. The Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act of 1986 was designed to
   a. Make it illegal for emergency rooms to turn away people without treatment.
   b. Stem the problem of “patient dumping.”
   c. Prevent hospitals and emergency rooms from asking patients if they have health insurance.
   d. All of the above.
   e. Both a and b.
9. The National Institutes of Health
   a. administers the national health insurance system in the United States.
   b. provides funds for medical research in the United States.
   c. is the largest hospital and physicians interest group in the United States.
   d. administers the Medicare and Medicaid programs.
   e. is the federal agency that regulates private health insurance companies.

10. National, state, and local governments pay for ___ percent of the country’s total health bill.
    a. 20
    b. 30
    c. 46
    d. 56
    e. 66

11. Which of the following statements is FALSE?
    a. Every other industrialized nation in the world, other than the U.S., has adopted some form of national health insurance.
    b. About two-thirds of Americans support the idea of universal health care event if it involves more taxes.
    c. Fifty-nine percent of “conservatives” support universal health care.
    d. The American Medical Association opposes universal health care.
    e. Many American businesses are at a competitive disadvantage in the global economy because they carry hefty health care costs for their employees.

12. The public assistance program designed to provide health care for poor Americans is
    a. Medicaid
    b. Medicare
    c. Social Security
    d. CHIPs
    e. TANF

13. Which aspect of health care costs has increased the fastest?
    a. emergency room care
    b. prescription drugs
    c. prenatal care
    d. outpatient surgery
    e. treatment for drug and alcohol abuse

14. The enforcement of the Clean Air Act and other antipollution legislation is administered by what regulatory body?
    a. Department of Interior
    b. Environmental Protection Agency
    c. Department of Justice
    d. Occupational Safety and Health Administration
    e. Federal Pollution Board
15. Being on the endangered species list requires that
   a. both federal and state governments enact policies to protect the habitat of the species.
   b. the federal government alone must enact policies to protect the habitat of the species.
   c. state governments allow taxes to be raised to protect the habitat of the species.
   d. all habitats where the species may possibly reside be declared national parks.
   e. the Sierra Club raise funds to help protect the habitat of the species.

16. To successfully dispose of nuclear waste, it must be isolated from the environment for ________ years.
   a. 10
   b. 100
   c. 1,000
   d. 5,000
   e. 10,000

17. The Superfund is paid for by
   a. a voluntary check-off system on federal income tax forms.
   b. taxes on chemical products.
   c. a special tax on automobiles, trucks, snowmobiles, and motorized farm vehicles.
   d. the federal gasoline tax.
   e. aviation fuel taxes.

18. The United States has about ___ percent of the world’s oil but uses ____ of it.
   a. 2; one-quarter
   b. 2; one-half
   c. 20; one-quarter
   d. 20; one-half
   e. 30; one-quarter

19. The Climate Stewardship Act
   a. would require large companies to reduce emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.
   b. was proposed by Senators John McCain and Joe Lieberman.
   c. is supported by a large majority of Americans.
   d. all of the above.
   e. none of the above.

20. Which of the following is TRUE of policymaking for technological issues?
   a. Individual citizens are unlikely to have the information or resources to participate meaningfully.
   b. It relies heavily on group representation.
   c. It has resulted in an increased scope of government, as government has headed the call for a greater role in high-tech issues.
   d. It is frequently very expensive.
   e. All of the above are true
TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS

Circle the correct answer:

1. Although many nations consider health care a right, the United States does not. T / F
2. Americans are healthier and live longer than those who live in other democracies because Americans spend more for health care. T / F
3. Forty-six million Americans lack health insurance coverage. T / F
4. Access to health insurance in the U.S. is closely tied to race and income. T / F
5. Bill Clinton was the first president to propose a system of national health insurance. T / F
6. Medicare faces a more severe financial crisis than does Social Security. T / F
7. Nonrenewable resources are not replaced by nature once consumed. T / F
8. Eighty-seven percent of the nation’s energy comes from coal, oil, and natural gas. T / F
9. President Clinton never submitted the Kyoto Treaty to the Senate for approval and in 2001 George W. Bush renounced it. T / F
10. Policy making for high-tech issues relies heavily on group representation. T / F

SHORT ANSWER/SHORT ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the main causes for the increases in health care costs in the United States?
2. What is the purpose of Medicare? How does Medicare work? What challenges face Medicare in the future?
3. Explain President George W. Bush’s approach to health care reform.
4. What were the main provisions of the Clean Air Act of 1970?
5. In what ways and how do high-tech issues limit public participation in democratic policymaking?
ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Describe the health care system in the United States. How do the infant mortality rate, life expectancy, access to health care, and health care costs in the United States compare with other western industrialized countries?

2. Describe the development of health management organizations in the United States. What are the key characteristics of HMOs? What problems did they solve? What problems have they created?

3. What democratic concerns are raised by the limitations of health care in the United States? Do citizens need guaranteed health care in order to be considered “full citizens”? What is holding the U.S. from moving to a more universal system of health care—and what does this say about democratic policymaking.

4. What are the competing interests at stake in environmental policy? How can the government reconcile the need for environmental policy with other interests, such as economic competition, jobs, and finances?

5. What is the most significant environmental issue confronting the U.S.? What issue is most critical globally? Given this issue, what is the most appropriate policy solution? What do lessons from previous environmental policies (those involving, for example, clean air, clean water, endangered species, wilderness preservation, global warming) have to offer in the way of lessons for future change and reform?