

Re: OT: Health care in other countries

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- *From:* Richard Henry <pomerado@xxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 24 Feb 2009 09:30:00 -0800 (PST)
-

On Feb 24, 12:12 am, James Arthur <bogusabd...@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

James Arthur wrote:

Nobody wrote:

On Tue, 24 Feb 2009 01:09:31 +0000, Ross Herbert wrote:

:I was reading a book "My Descent into
Death" where the author
mentioned,
:in 1985, being in a hospital in Paris, France.
He mentioned the nurses
:were not authorized to give him painkillers,
and the sole doctor in the
:ER was going home for the weekend.
:
:My nephew today over lunch told me he
heard on the radio recently
about a
:French-American woman who had lumps
on her breast, and the French doc
:wouldn't do a thing for her. She had to fly
to America to get a proper
:diagnosis done and surgery performed, all
the while suffering from
pain.
:
:How is health insurance in Europe and
elsewhere?
:
:Not looking for a flame war, just would like
to know how it is
elsewhere.
:
:Thanks,
:

Re: OT: Health care in other countries

:Michael

I find that hearsay evidence difficult to believe. France has had an active breast cancer screening program since the early 90's and women can have a mammography as easily as anywhere else in the western world. Up to 40,000 french women every year have partial or total mastectomy and I am sure that early stage breast cancer would be appropriately treated with radiation and chemo-therapy in cases not requiring radical surgery.

I'm similarly sceptical (or, more accurately, reminded of the saying that "the plural of anecdote is not data").

A WHO survey from a few years back put France in first place for overall provision of health care; surveys of life expectancy and infant mortality invariably put France in or around the top ten. E.g.:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_life_expectancy

CIA World Factbook = 11th territory, 8th nation
UN = 10th

[US = 30th/45th and 38th respectively.]

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_infant_mortality_rate

Re: OT: Health care in other countries

CIA = 6th (217th of 222, in decreasing order of infant mortality).

UN = 12th (184th of 195, ditto)

[US = 43rd and 33rd respectively.]

Now, there are a whole lot of other factors which can affect life

expectancy and infant mortality, aside from healthcare.

OTOH, trying to

quantify "healthcare" is far from straightforward.

Infant mortality is a poor metric for comparison, since the different countries calculate it differently. In particular, the U.S. includes all births, while certain European and Asian nations exclude premature, low birth weight babies, those with birth defects, stillborns, and generally, babies judged 'non-viable.'

That impacts our life-expectancy as well--adding in a few zeroes drags down the average.

A much better metric for comparing healthcare quality might cancer survival.

Hmmm...here's some data, but the comparison still isn't clear since the prevalent cancers are somewhat lifestyle related, which might not be comparable country-to-country.

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/561737>

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