

Managed Care & Health Insurance
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Assignment #1

Discussion Paper

The purpose of this paper is to examine a topic or issue of interest to you from within the framework of concepts that you have learned in this class. The goal of this assignment is to help make this course more relevant to you and possibly to identify a topic you may wish to explore further as part of your final assignment.

A successful paper will briefly:

- Present a summary of the current situation associated with your topic/issue.
- Describe 1 or 2 challenges associated with your topic.
- Describe 1 or 2 key health care players / stakeholders involved in this problem area.
- Present and evaluate 1 or 2 possible responses for possible resolution to the challenge and discuss how the key players might be affected.
- Draw a conclusion about the problem and its potential resolution and discuss related areas for further study.

You are encouraged to take a special approach or spin to the topic that is relevant to your career trajectory. For example, you could approach an issue from a management, policy, research/analytic, or public health / clinical or international perspective. The choice is yours, but whatever you do, the paper must be relevant enough to this course's content area to ensure that it can be handled in the manner discussed in #3 above.

One of the objectives of this exercise is to allow you to delve into the vast literature in this area. In all cases you should start with the course resources including "additional" readings, suggested monographs, and course web-links. You should identify some key literature on this topic, and your paper should draw on the evidence. However, this exercise is not meant to be an in-depth literature review, rather you should use the literature to help you understand and frame the issue.

Some may continue work on this topic, as part of your final assignment (#2), but choosing a topic that will serve as the focus of your final paper is not a requirement.

Format Requirements:

- The paper should clearly indicate its goal and the course constructs it will explore.
- 3-5 pages in length, double-spaced, with normal font and margins.
- You should cite a modest number of references (7-12) that in most cases will include, at least:
 - Some references from the "additional" or "suggested monograph" reading list;
 - Some articles you found on your own; and
 - Some material you found on the web. (You should cite the specific URL using the accepted format).

We hope you find this to be a useful and interesting exercise that: (1) helps you synthesize the course material; (2) makes this course more relevant to you; and (3) helps you explore a possible final paper topic.