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Bulletin

WHAT'S YOUR HEALTH CARE WORTH?

Conversation on Health — Real “health clock” brings perspective to government spending alarm

Alternate web ticker shows what Victoria spends on health care for each individual British Columbian (hint: it's just one penny for every one minute, 46 seconds)

To put the fear-mongering from government and business about health care costs into perspective, the Hospital Employees' Union has developed its own “health care clock” in conjunction with the BC Health Coalition. You can view the alternate clock at www.bchealthconversation.ca.

The alternative ticker shows just what the government spends on health care for each individual British Columbian every second of every day. It's just one penny for every one minute, 46 seconds, so you'll need to stay on the special website more than eight minutes before the spending on your own health care reaches five cents.

The site suggests that at that cost — less than \$3,000 a year — medicare is a good deal for British Columbians. The site includes another ticker which demonstrates the number of bankruptcies filed in the United States in the aftermath of a serious health problem while you are visiting the site (one bankruptcy in the US every 30 seconds).

The web ticker was developed in response to the provincial government's omnipresent “costs ticker” on its “Conversation on Health” website. The government's ticker purports to show how much the government is spending on health care for all British Columbians while individuals are on the “Conversation” website.

The government ticker was copied by its business allies in the Vancouver Board of Trade this week, as they unveiled their own “health clock” in an attempt to increase pressure to force cutbacks and bring about the privatization of medicare.

The alternate site also points out the provincial investment in the health care of British Columbians has remained relatively stable as a proportion of the economy — about seven cents on the dollar.