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News from the Michigan Nurses Association

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University of Michigan's "Victors Care" Exploits Unequal Access to Health Care

Expensive concierge service shouldn't be required for quality primary care

(Ann Arbor, MI) This week, after an internal presentation to staff about relatively new "Victors Care" program, nurses at the University of Michigan Health System are speaking out with concerns that this program is a move towards separate and unequal health care.

Victors Care concierge physician services are currently being offered to a limited number of patients who can afford it. For the price of \$3,600 per year (\$300 per month) above the cost of traditional health insurance, the program will provide elite "access" to a primary care doctor. (A discounted price of \$2700 per year is only available through June and is still well out of reach for most patients.)

"The website boasts that your Victors Care physician will only have 20% of the patient load as traditional primary care doctors, and that patients will have time to ask questions and build a relationship with their health care provider," said Katie Oppenheim, RN and Chair of the University of Michigan Professional Nurse Council. "It shouldn't cost extra to do that. All of our patients deserve to have their medical questions addressed in an unhurried way. You shouldn't have to be wealthy to be treated with human dignity."

"I am ashamed that our University would sell adequate primary care as a privilege rather than doing more to ensure that all patients have convenient access to care and compassionate help managing chronic conditions," concluded Oppenheim.

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