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PHIL 235 Final Assignment

Should healthcare be considered a fundamental human right?

Should healthcare be considered a fundamental human right? Well, first, let us define what human rights means. It is defined as "inalienable fundamental rights to which a person is inherently entitled because she or he is human. [1]" Fundamental Rights, for example, life, liberty, and freedom to speak, are things we are born with and are only lost when others take them away. Anything that someone else has to give is not a fundamental right. If someone takes another person's freedom or property, they deprive them of exercising their rights but do not take their innate rights away. While violated, the victim still retains that inalienable right, which survives independently of their situation: a right cannot be taken away. Our wellbeing and that of our loved ones is something we think about every day as humans. Regardless of factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, or financial status, we view our health as our primary and indispensable possession. Therefore, the argument that healthcare is not a human right contradicts the belief that access to medical care is necessary for individuals to exercise their fundamental rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Without adequate healthcare, individuals may not be able to enjoy these rights fully and may even lose them due to illness, disease, or injury. Furthermore, healthcare is essential for promoting and maintaining public health, which is also a fundamental right. In addition, the lack of access to healthcare disproportionately affects

vulnerable populations, such as those living in poverty or with pre-existing conditions, which can result in systemic discrimination and inequality. While healthcare may not be a natural right in the same way as life, liberty, and freedom of speech, it is a necessary condition for fully exercising these rights.

According to Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, the right to health is a fundamental human right [2]. Everyone should have access to the health services they need without suffering financial hardship. Free health care is not a right that comes with birth, but having access to decent minimum health care is. In "The Right to a Decent Minimum of Health Care," Allen E. Buchanan argues that there is a moral right to a decent minimum of healthcare that all individuals are entitled to [3]. He argues that this right is grounded in the fundamental value of individual well-being and that the right to healthcare is necessary for individuals to live healthy and fulfilling lives. Buchanan also discusses the limits of this right, noting that it does not require the provision of all medically available treatments but rather a decent minimum of healthcare that is necessary to meet basic health needs. He further argues that this right imposes obligations on governments and societies to provide access to healthcare and that failure to do so constitutes a violation of this moral right. His argument supports the view that healthcare is not just a privilege for the wealthy but a fundamental human right that should be accessible to all individuals. Therefore, providing access to healthcare is a duty of governments and societies to protect and promote the well-being and dignity of all individuals.

Additionally, healthcare as a fundamental right can be explained through some ethical theories like utilitarianism and Kantian and virtue ethics. Utilitarianism focuses on the greatest good for the most significant number of people. From a utilitarian perspective, providing healthcare to all individuals can lead to overall well-being and happiness for society as a whole. Access to healthcare is essential for individuals to maintain their health, recover from illnesses, and prevent future health problems. Without access to healthcare, individuals may suffer unnecessarily, leading to physical and emotional pain, decreased quality of life, and decreased productivity. Therefore, healthcare denial access can have negative consequences for individuals and society as a whole, as the health and well-being of individuals are essential for the functioning of society. Furthermore, providing decent healthcare to all individuals can promote greater equality and fairness in society. By ensuring everyone has access to healthcare, individuals who may not otherwise have been able to afford medical care can receive the treatment they need. Therefore, it can lead to a more equitable distribution of healthcare resources, reducing the disparities in health outcomes between different groups of people. In addition, providing healthcare to all individuals can also have economic benefits as healthcare can increase productivity and economic growth by ensuring that individuals are healthy and able to work. It can also reduce the burden of healthcare costs on individuals, families, and society as a whole, as preventative care and early intervention can reduce the need for costly treatments and hospitalizations.

From a Kantian perspective, decent healthcare is a fundamental human right. It also emphasizes the inherent worth of human beings and argues that individuals should be treated as ends in themselves, not merely as a means to an end. According to Kantian ethics, every human possesses a unique and inherent dignity that must be respected. Therefore, access to healthcare is essential for individuals to maintain their dignity and pursue their goals. In other words,

healthcare is a basic necessity that enables individuals to lead fulfilling lives and realize their potential. Furthermore, Kantian ethics emphasizes the importance of fairness and justice, and access to healthcare is necessary to ensure that individuals are not unfairly disadvantaged in their pursuit of well-being.

Lastly, virtue ethics emphasizes the development of moral character and cultivating virtues such as compassion, generosity, and justice. Healthcare as a fundamental human right can be argued through a virtue ethics perspective, as providing healthcare to all individuals is a manifestation of the virtues of compassion and justice. Healthcare providers who embody these virtues are more likely to provide high-quality care and treat patients with dignity and respect. It also emphasizes the importance of fairness and equity in the distribution of resources, including healthcare, which is essential to ensuring that all individuals have access to the care they need to lead fulfilling lives.

In order to assert that healthcare is an inherent human entitlement, it is necessary to establish a healthcare system that provides inexpensive and high-quality medical services to everyone.

Achieving the goal of universal healthcare requires implementing a range of strategies. Hence, countries and provinces will have different approaches to implementing the right to health. This can be achieved through various policy measures, such as Universal health coverage - Affordable health care - Quality health care.

Governments should work towards achieving universal health coverage, which ensures that all individuals have access to a comprehensive range of health services without experiencing financial hardship. This can be achieved through various financing mechanisms, such as social health insurance, tax-based financing, or a combination of both [4]. The cost of healthcare services should also be affordable [5] and not be a barrier to accessing necessary care.

Governments should implement policies that regulate the prices of medical services, medications, and medical equipment to ensure that they are affordable for all individuals. Access to health care services should be not only affordable but also of high quality. The healthcare system should prioritize evidence-based practices, patient-centered care, and modern medical technology to provide high-quality care to all individuals. Also, there is the right to access quality health facilities, goods, and services on a non-discriminatory basis, especially for vulnerable or marginalized groups [6].

In conclusion, *healthcare* is a fundamental human right that should be accessible and affordable to everyone. This does not necessarily mean that healthcare should be provided for free, but rather that it should be available to all individuals without any discrimination or financial burden. Ethical theories such as utilitarianism, Kantian, and virtue ethics support the view that healthcare is a fundamental human right. Healthcare denial access can negatively affect individuals and society, and providing decent healthcare to all individuals can promote greater equality and fairness in society. Also, access to decent minimum health care is a necessity and a right, as individuals must live healthy and fulfilling lives. Therefore, governments and societies have a duty to ensure that individuals can access healthcare, as this promotes the well-being and dignity of all individuals. Furthermore, by ensuring everyone has access to healthcare, governments can promote equality and prevent discrimination, especially against poor people. Recognizing healthcare as a fundamental human right is not only morally and ethically right but also necessary to ensure the well-being and dignity of all individuals. By expanding healthcare coverage, increasing healthcare funding, and investing in preventative care and early intervention programs, governments and societies can help promote greater equality and fairness in

healthcare, reduce disparities in health outcomes, and ultimately lead to better health outcomes for individuals and society as a whole. Governments have a crucial role to play in creating policies and regulations that ensure equitable access to healthcare services. At the same time, the broader society must recognize the importance of healthcare as a fundamental human right and advocate for policies and programs that promote universal access to healthcare.

Bibliography

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