



Healthcare

Discussion Guide

Let's review

At the start of each discussion, review the conversation ground rules for returning and new members alike to set the stage for active participation by all. You may want to use a timer as you go around the room. And don't forget to decide who will take notes and post a discussion recap.

- **Be open and curious:** Everyone has a unique perspective, so be prepared to hear a different point of view. Listen first, and focus on the facts.
- **Be respectful and engaged:** Be sure that everyone has a chance to speak before adding a second comment or perspective. Encourage each other's participation.
- **Be focused and concise:** Keep the conversation centered on the issue and the brief.

The "Table-it" Rule: If the group has gone off-topic but the area is of interest, the group can table the conversation and save it for another time to be addressed in a different manner.

Let's begin

*Each member is invited to answer the following questions in a **two-three minute reaction** to the brief.*

- Introduce yourself, and share what "lens of care" did you wear when reviewing this brief (e.g. personal, professional, community, state, nation, global)?
- What did you find most interesting or surprising from reading the brief? What matters?

Let's discuss

Pick 2 or 3 questions that resonate with the group and discuss, or choose your own.

- Is there a right to healthcare? If so, what is the best way to secure that right?
- Are individuals or the government better equipped to make healthcare decisions?
- Which should be a higher priority for policymakers? Increasing insurance coverage rates, controlling healthcare costs, or improving the quality of medicine?
- How have changes in the healthcare marketplace affected you and your family? What changes would you like to see made?

Let's act

Spread the Word: Some Facts to Share

- More than 90 percent of the medicine being practiced today did not exist in 1950.

- In 1930, Americans spent \$2.8 billion on healthcare, or \$23 per person. In 2017, that figure was \$3.5 trillion—\$10,739 per person.
- Approximately 49% of Americans get their health insurance through their employers as of the most recent data, from 2017.
- Federal resources dedicated to health care amount to about 8% of the economy and have grown 230% since 2000.
- An MRI of the lower back costs about \$140 at an imaging center in Louisiana but costs over \$7600 at a center in California.
- In 2017, the government, consumers, and insurers spent \$333 billion on prescription drugs
- Whereas only 40% of small companies with fewer than 25 employees offer health insurance, 97% of companies with over 100 employees offer coverage.

Engage Locally

- *Learn more*
 - **Research your elected representatives' positions on healthcare law** and his or her vision for how to tackle the healthcare challenges facing Americans at large and your community specifically.
 - Search on your state or municipality's website for your local Department of Health using keywords such as "healthcare" or "department of health."
 - You can also search for healthcare in your state on [Ballotpedia](#).
 - **Investigate the healthcare marketplace in your state** at [Healthcare.gov](#).
 - See how your state is implementing the ACA and related Medicaid expansions with [the NCSL's tracker](#).
- *Reach out*
 - Explore what organizations, legislators, and journalists you could contact to ask questions, learn more and get engaged.
 - If you have trouble finding the information you are looking for on your municipality's website, consider contacting agency or department heads. You can find the contact information for federal, state, and local government officials [here](#).
 - The Policy Circle offers a number of resources for engaging on the local level. Learn how to write a letter to the editor on [The Policy Circle website](#).
 - It's easy to establish a relationship with your legislators. Start by introducing yourself with [this template]. You can also learn to write to your representatives or set up a meeting with a legislator on [The Policy Circle website](#).

Post a Recap/Dive Deeper

- Summarize your discussion to share thoughts with members not present. Who can post a meeting recap on your circle page?
- Decide your next meeting topic. Want to discuss a related brief at your next meeting? Suggestions include:
 - [Aging in the 21st Century](#)
 - [Entitlements](#)
 - [The Opioid Epidemic](#)
- Dive Deeper into this area. If this is an area you would like to pursue further consider taking possible steps to influence policy. The Policy Circle offers resources for [developing](#)

[a message about your issue](#) and [organizing a petition](#) to amplify your voice and raise awareness.