

COVID-19 and public health emergencies: Talk radio call-in sample scripts

*Radio call-in shows reach a **large and loyal audience**, especially locally, and represent a great opportunity to advocate for single-payer reform. Consider calling in during a COVID-19 update, or during a segment dedicated to health care. **Keep your initial comment short** (the host may cut you off) but be prepared to engage further if given the opportunity.*



General message

Hi, I'm really concerned about our response to COVID-19. People need to seek medical care when they first develop symptoms, but how can someone do that if they don't have insurance or can't afford to go to the doctor? What we really need is a Medicare-for-All system that covers everybody, and not just for Coronavirus. Because nobody should have to worry about health coverage in the middle of a pandemic.

Message as a physician

Hi, I'm Doctor [NAME] and I'm really concerned about our response to COVID-19. For years, I've seen patients who have waited too long to seek care because they didn't have health insurance or couldn't afford their copays. That's going to be especially dangerous when it comes to Coronavirus. What we really need is a Medicare-for-All system that covers *everybody* and allows me and my colleagues to simply do our jobs.

Additional discussion points

- We don't have a health system in the United States, which makes it impossible to coordinate a nationwide response to COVID-19. Medicare for All would help us collaborate to fight pandemics.
- Tens of millions of people are losing their jobs, which means millions are also losing their health coverage at the exact moment they're going to need it most. Under single payer, coverage would be guaranteed.
- Coronavirus is especially deadly for Black Americans, many of whom live in communities where poverty and poor environmental conditions make them more susceptible to COVID-19.
- Assisted living and elder care facilities are at high risk for COVID-19 outbreaks. Medicare for All would buy out investor-owned facilities and would prioritize patient care.
- We need to improve and expand testing before we can ease restrictions. A single-payer system would devote whatever resources are necessary to accurately measure the rate of infection.
- People who are incarcerated and people who are experiencing homelessness are at very high risk for COVID-19. We need to reduce our prison population and increase access to stable housing.
- Social distancing and isolation are having a profound effect on our mental health. Medicare for All would make mental health services available to all Americans before, during, and after pandemics.
- We need to listen to scientists and public health officials as we fight COVID-19. We should also learn what we can from countries like South Korea, Germany, and New Zealand that are having success.