

Healthcare for Veterans Privatization Won't Fix the VA

First it was Social Security, then Medicare and Medicaid, and then the public health care option under Obamacare. Now, in the wake of recent allegations that veterans hospitals put patients on secret wait lists, Republicans are calling for the privatization of the Veterans Health Administration, the nation's largest public health care system which provides cost-effective and high quality care to 6.2 million veterans.

It is of course unacceptable if patients suffered as a result of any delays. But regardless of what went wrong at any VA facility, turning veterans over to private sector insurers and for-profit hospitals is not the solution.

With its salaried staff of nearly 280,000, the VA has long been a model for health care delivery. The VA's 152 hospitals, 900 clinics, 300 mental health centers, and other facilities — many located in rural areas that the private sector ignores — care for more than 230,000 people a day. In a recent survey of veterans for the American Customer Satisfaction Index, patients rated the system's services as equal to or better than private sector health care facilities.

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San Francisco

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Speaker: **Suzanne Gordon**

Suzanne Gordon is an award-winning journalist and author. She has written for the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Washington Post, the Atlantic Monthly, the American Prospect, the Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star, JAMA, The Annals of Internal Medicine, and others. She is the co-editor of the Culture and Politics of Healthcare Work series at Cornell University Press. - See more at: <http://suzannecgordon.com/meet-suzanne/#sthash.3vsCLyJs.dpuf>

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