Introduction

Due to political and cultural differences in each country, healthcare and policy needs will be different, as will their execution and ease. Each of the three countries in this paper, United States, United Kingdom, and The Netherlands have different aspects to their healthcare that differentiates them. Some forms of healthcare work better than others, however, universal healthcare appears to have a lower individual cost and overall healthier citizens despite country differences (Battistella 1993).

United States Policy Context

The United States has several components in its political organization that can make it especially hard to pass new policy. The first of these being that the United States runs with a Presidential System. The same checks and balances in place to keep each branch of the government in check also make it innately harder to pass new policy under (Eaton 2000). The separation of powers and agendas of each branch of government also make passing policy harder.

Another consideration as to why it is difficult to pass policy in the US is federalism. The Federalist nature of the United States means that there are several layers of government, and most of the policy updates happen more locally than federally. The United States is such a large country, that nationwide elections couldn’t possibly occur frequently. Some states have gone on to implement healthcare updates on their own terms but getting these changes to a federal level is much more difficult. Federalism increases the innovation and experimentation with policy at a smaller level, with hopes of the trend spreading throughout the country, but this does not always
occur. The size of the United States also plays a role in Americans wanting different policies passed. The North and South have different cultural ideas and policy desires, as do Coastal and Midwest regions. This difference in citizen’s desires plays a role in complicating the Federal government’s policy making decisions.

All of the complexities of the United States local and federal governments lead to the more complex healthcare systems in place.

**United Kingdom Policy Context**

Moving on from the client country, the United Kingdom has a more universal and cohesive healthcare system in place, called the National Health Service. NHS is paid for with payroll taxes, but is otherwise free. No healthcare system is perfect, and even the UK’s system has its flaws, but there are some factors found in the United Kingdom’s political infrastructure that helped them arrive at a more centralized healthcare system. The United Kingdom, unlike the United States, has a Parliamentary system. A bi-product of this system is that the executive and legislative branches tend to be more harmonious in agenda setting. This is due to the legislature selecting a representative to become the Prime Minister from their majority party (Weaver 1985).

Another organizational factor for the UK is that its small size allows for a unitary system. This allows policies to be passed and updated quicker, and for more frequent elections to be held.

Each element listed allows for the United Kingdom to pass policy faster and with less chance for gridlock.
Netherlands Policy Context

Like the United Kingdom, the Netherlands also have universal healthcare, is parliamentary, and have a unitary system. All of these components make it more simplistic to pass new policy (Weaver 1985). The Netherlands' culture also has a large impact on the type of healthcare they have in place. The Netherlands have a mixed ideal welfare type, or a hybrid, but when it comes to healthcare they are largely social democratic. This means they are likely to distribute wealth when it comes to healthcare, and not ask for proof when it comes to giving help through the form of any testing. And returning to the concept of size, Netherlands is about half the size of the United Kingdom, resulting in more uniform political beliefs and easier implementation for policy. A small size can also help with state capacity because it is easier to make physical and mental changes to a smaller and more localized state (Grit 2002).

Client Nation Analysis

The United States healthcare system is one of the oldest healthcare systems in the world, because of this it is expected that it is really effective, this is not the case. The healthcare system in the United States is one of the most complicated healthcare systems among developed countries. Part of the reason it is so complicated is that they do not have a universal healthcare system and also not a uniform single-payer system or multi-payer system (DPEA 2019). “In 2014, 48 percent of U.S. health care spending came from private funds, with 28 percent coming from households and 20 percent coming from private businesses” (Department of Health 2015). All of this spending only
covers about ninety percent of the people living in the United States, there are still just under eleven percent of people who do not have healthcare.

Although the US spends by far the most amount of money on healthcare, they are ranked among the lowest of other highly developed nations including Australia, France, Germany, Canada, the U.K., and Sweden. Our healthcare system is unimaginably intricate, composed of hospitals, corporations, nursing homes, and care facilities (CBS 2018). It has a couple of different programs, including Medicare and Medicaid. Medicare is an insurance package for seniors and is paid for through taxes on payroll and given to eligible citizens over the age of sixty-five with special qualifications including disabilities. Medicaid, on the other hand, is an insurance package paid for by federal taxes for individuals living in the US with eligibility determined by states following government guidelines (AICGS 2012).

There are many problems with the US healthcare system that show, looking statistically, when we spend the most out of every country and have one of the worst systems. One reason for this is administrative inefficiency; basically, this describes doctors and nurses wasting time solving problems because patients have different insurance plans that cover different procedures and treatments. Since everyone does not have the same plan, and different plans cover different procedures doctors have to coordinate with insurance companies to make sure that what they are doing is covered by insurance. Another reason as described by Olga Khazan is underperforming primary care. There is a large problem with passing along relevant clinical information between specialists, primary-care physicians, and hospitals. Another large factor with this is unhealthy food, causing obesity and other illnesses (Khazan 2018).
There have been some government interventions toward helping healthcare become better and more affordable including the affordable care act. This act made substantial progress in decreasing the number of uninsured people living throughout the US, dropping the number from sixteen percent in 2010 to just over nine percent in 2015 (CRFB 2018). This act not only helped drop the number of uninsured, but it also helped improve access to care, and made healthcare more affordable (JAMA 2019).

**Netherland’s Policy Options**

There aren’t many problems that have arisen in the healthcare system in the Netherlands. A little background information on the Netherlands’ healthcare system is the fact that they do have Medicare that is paid by the government through the taxes and subsidies of the people and it helps cover most of the essential things that are needed to help receive the quality care. The Netherlands also requires that all adults must have a basic coverage insurance and on top of the basic insurance that the government offers, there is the option to receive additional services for an extra amount monthly. The Netherlands succeeds in the fact that their government helps offer a cheaper healthcare insurance through their basic insurance plan. Also, with the individual mandate on the requirement to have insurance, it encourages people to get and stay insured. Individual mandate also reduces the cost for each person because more people are paying into the system (Battistella 1993). They also succeed in the fact that the government does not allow the insurance companies to decline people based on their financial standing or their prior health situations. The government does this by making sure that it regulates the insurance companies tightly and that their plans are
within the rules and regulations they have and make sure the coverage is of a good quality. The Netherlands also offers tax deductions from health care costs and allows them to deduct these costs from their income tax, which is a benefit of having health insurance. Where the Netherlands’ healthcare fails a little bit is there is no employer mandate. With this there is no requirement for the employer to provide insurance to their employees, however, the employee does not need to obtain an insurance plan made by the employer. Therefore, this allows the employee to compare their healthcare options and select the one they think is the best for themselves.

United Kingdom Policy Options

The UK has a healthcare system called the National Health Services. It guarantees and provides care for everyone. In the United Kingdom, healthcare is provided without cost for all of the residents under the Health Act (2006). Most of those who live here rely on that service and because of this they don’t have to buy any further private healthcare plans. It is a very easy process considering whenever one arrives in the UK (assuming you hadn’t lived there before) all that would have to be done is to register on the NHS system and it will give you access to the full service, including some of the top hospitals that are in the United Kingdom. This also makes it very easy to find a doctor, and there are only a few areas that aren’t covered by the National Health Services. healthcare system is publicly financed and most of the funding comes from the general taxpayer, but a small amount comes from a payroll taxOffice for National Statistics (2016). The health care system in the UK even lets visitors who are
undocumented immigrants, non-European travelers or visitors can be treated for free in the emergency room and for some particular infectious diseases.

An estimate of around 10.5 percent of residents in the United Kingdom were paying for a private health insurance plan in the year of 2015 and had 3.94 million policies held (InterNations Go!). Therefore, a small amount of those who feel it is necessary to purchase a private health care plan and feel secure with the basic healthcare plan that provides care.

What does the National Health Services in the UK pay for or provide? Mental health care, vaccinations, screenings, necessary dental care, hospital care (for both in and out patients), immunizations, care for those with disabilities, physician visits, prescription drugs, and many more services (Office for National Statistics 2016). All of these services that are provided are essential for the efficiency of the healthcare system and one of the reasons that the system is so productive. The country and the NHS are currently still working on the healthcare system to create a multi-year plan that will help to modify services based on the budget for local populations.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, every country’s health care system is run differently. How a country is governed can determine how effective a healthcare system is. One country might work better with certain policies, but another country might work better with a different policy. At the same time, some countries might not have the most effective policies. The United States does not have universal healthcare, and therefore does not have the benefit of lowering individual costs for its citizens (Battistella 1993). In contrast, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands are both universal and provide care for
everyone in their country. This is a factor that makes these countries have some of the
top healthcare systems in the world. The UK and the Netherlands are very good
example of an effective healthcare system which benefits the overall health of their
country. With that being said, the United States should take a look at the policies in
these countries and see how it’s positive factor on the health of the county and how
beneficial universal healthcare is.

Work Cited

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