

# Meeting Healthcare's Challenge

**H**ealthcare. We worry about cost. Availability and accessibility. Quality.

What benefits are we going to have? What might I lose? Which plan is best for me? Where can I find the kind of long-term care my parents need? What if my child gets sick and I'm told my plan doesn't cover him? Can I afford it? Always, *always*, "Can I afford it?"

Healthcare. You can't live without it. Sometimes, it seems we can't live with it. SEIU Local 503, OPEU members are

For more than 20 years, under the Bargaining Unit Benefits Board (BUBB), we have designed the healthcare benefit plan our Union and our labor contract provided represented state employees the Union represented. Now, under the Public Employee Benefits Board (PEBB), we share that authority with other union representatives (as well as management), but we still have a great deal of responsibility for shaping something that has a significant affect on our compensation and our quality of life.

While most of us feel good about the care we receive from our own family doctors and hospitals, we are growing concerned about the affordability of health care in the future and the rapidly growing number of uninsured workers and children in Oregon.

Family health insurance premiums will rise to more than \$8,000 this year.

The price of health insurance premiums impacts every SEIU Local 503, OPEU member when we are at the bargaining table, every time we go to the doctor or buy prescription drugs, in some way, nearly every day of our lives. We face the cost of healthcare every day because it's contained in the cost of goods and services we buy and the taxes we pay.

There are almost 500,000 uninsured Oregonians, the vast majority of whom are working and paying taxes, but don't have health insurance provided by their employers for themselves or their children,

older workers who are ready to retire must keep working to maintain their health insurance coverage until they qualify for Medicare.

*...we are growing concerned about the affordability of health care in the future and the rapidly growing number of uninsured workers and children in Oregon.*

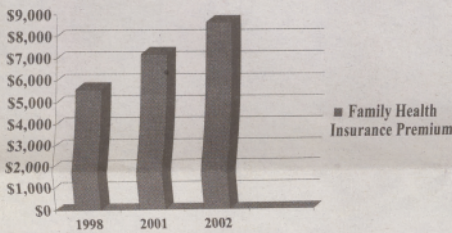
The problem for all of us today is:

- ◆ The growing number of uninsured; especially the working poor, children and those who are recently unemployed.
- ◆ Quality concerns; especially in nursing

*Continued on Page 22...*

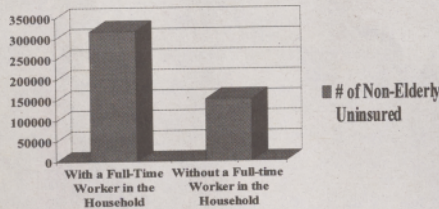
## Family Premiums Increasing

source: The Oregonian, Families USA, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Wall Street Journal



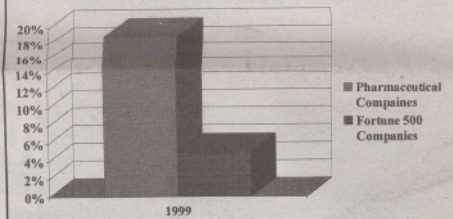
## 2/3 of Oregonians without health insurance have a full-time worker in their household

(Source: The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation)



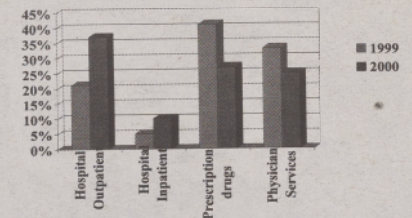
## Drug company profits almost four times as large as those of other Fortune 500 Companies

(source: Fortune Magazine from companies' annual reports)



## A number of factors are increasing overall health care costs

(source: Wall Street Journal and the Center for Studying Health System Change)



*The price of health insurance premiums impact every SEIU Local 503, OPEU member when we are at the bargaining table...*

knowledgeable and responsible users of healthcare. But, we can't alone take on the challenge to make quality healthcare accessible, affordable and secure alone—and we are not.

yet they earn too much to qualify for the Oregon Health Plan. The cost of an uninsured's person's visit to a hospital emergency room is part of the cost insured patients pay for hospital stays. Additionally, many

## WHERE DO BRAND-NAME DRUG MAKERS' PRIORITIES LIE?

Expanding Marketing Staff While Research Staff Declines, 1995-2000

