

My name is Ross Kristal, and I live at 28 Lyon Street in New Haven. I am an internal medicine resident physician, who serves as a primary care doctor and doctor for patients admitted to the hospital.

Far too often, I take care patients with advance disease processes that developed in part because of they cannot afford their medications. I met Mr. L one year ago in my primary care clinic. Mr. L has poorly controlled diabetes. His diabetes is uncontrolled because he cannot afford to pay for the medications and supplies needed to manage his diabetes. Since he cannot adequately manage his blood sugar, he's been hospitalized numerous times for diabetes complications, including a heart attack, as well as, multiple foot ulcers and bone infections requiring amputations of his toes and prolong antibiotic courses requiring lengthy hospital stays. With all of his medical complications, he cannot hold down a steady job and since he does not have a steady job to pay for the high prescription drug prices, he cannot afford the medications needed to prevent his medical complications.

Unfortunately, this is not an uncommon story. More than half of the US population routinely use prescription drugs and 15% of the population takes five or more drugs (Kantor et al., 2015). Lowering the cost of prescription drugs is a top health care priority among Americans (KFF, 2017) with one survey ranking it the top domestic issues for politicians to act on (Politico, 2017).

I fully endorse all the Health Care Cabinet's recommendations to restrain the costs of prescription drugs and advise the legislature to adopt them.

References:

1. Kantor ED, Rehm CD, Haas JS, Chan AT, Giovannucci EL. Trends in Prescription Drug Use Among Adults in the United States From 1999-2012. *JAMA*. 2015;314(17):1818–1830. doi:10.1001/jama.2015.13766
2. Kaiser Family Foundation. 2017. Kaiser health tracking poll: Health care priorities for 2017. <http://www.kff.org/health-costs/poll-fidning/kaiser-health-tracking-poll-health-care-priorities-for-2017>.
3. Politico. 2017. Americans' top priorities for Congress though the end of the year. <https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000015e-7bce-d079-a3fe-7bce31540000>.

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