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Letter to the Editor
Wheeling Intelligencer

Subject: Individuals on Disabilities

Dear Editor,

I have been practicing medicine in this area since 2006 and I must inform my fellow West Virginians that the current system is mismanaging our disabled citizens and how the current system enables, not empowers those with disabilities.

I, like many of you expect our government to help out our less fortunate citizens, who thru no fault of their own, were born with or have suffered a catastrophic injury to their mind, body or both.

While this may be true for a large proportion of our fellow Americans, I have been treating hundreds of Americans who have been signed off by our Judges as "disabled" yet are not getting the required follow up treatment. Many of my younger than traditional "Medicare" patients come to me stating that they are "disabled".

After further investigation, I ask them point blank if they are receiving help for their disability which ranges from "psychological" to "medical" conditions. The answers are "scary" in that over 90% state that no, they are not receiving any treatment especially when diagnosed as having a "Psychological" disability.

In addition to that, every one of my "disabled" patients is afraid to work "legally" as they risk "losing everything" which is a lot if you're only getting monthly Disability checks.

I have been told that most can legally make an additional \$12,000/year yet I have never received a straight answer from Disability.

Not all disabled Americans suffer from permanent impairment and could potentially return to the workforce if properly tended to.

It make s no sense to me that after going thru the courts to be assigned "disabled" we are not ensuring that these patients get the care they deserve. These individuals should also be held responsible for continuing their access to their health care professional lest they lose their "disability benefits". Both our disabled citizens and the government need to be more invested in one another.

Resources are limited and both the "disabled" and those who disable them need to be more accountable otherwise we are just throwing bad money after bad and no one wins especially the tax payer.

Sincerely

Roland Chalifoux Jr.,DO