

Is Amazon primed for health care?

Can Amazon compete in health care too? That's what the online retail giant hopes.

Last week, Amazon announced that it would partner with Berkshire Hathaway and JPMorgan Chase to address soaring health-care costs, CNN Money reported. The trio—Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, Warren Buffett and Jamie Dimon—says the yet-to-be-named company will “give the firms’ U.S. employees and their families a better option on health insurance and will not be motivated by profit.”

CNBC reported that Berkshire's Buffett called skyrocketing health-care costs a “tapeworm” and that JPMorgan's Dimon said, “Our people want transparency, knowledge and control when it comes to managing their health care.”

While this is a new venture for the three huge corporations, it's been the mission for 23 years at Samaritan Ministries International, one of the leading health-care sharing ministries in America. For more than two decades, Samaritan Ministries has enabled hundreds of thousands of people to honor God through their health care, connecting these members in a faith community that “bears one another's burdens” as the Bible instructs in Galatians 6:2.

“Transparency, knowledge and control are exactly what Samaritan Ministries offers to our 75,000 member households, as they honor God and become a part of a biblical community of believers through their health care,” said Anthony Hopp, Samaritan Ministries' director of external relations. “Health care sharing provides transparency in that members know exactly where their money is going each month, and they can see the inner workings of the ministry. Members also receive

reductions in the monthly shares they send directly to other families, when not all of the money is needed, so they know they will only be asked to send share money for what is actually needed by members. Secondly, we help members become more knowledgeable about their health care by providing them with ways to be good stewards of both their health and their medical expenses through tools that keep members 'in the know.' And finally, members directly control their own health care, through the choice of providers, treatment options and by knowing that they never pay for something that would dishonor God, such as abortions."

CNN Money also reported that health-care costs have soared for both employers and their workers over the past decade, with premiums jumping nearly 50 percent for family coverage since 2008 and more than tripling since 1999.

"Meanwhile, employees are shouldering more of the cost when they actually get medical care because their deductibles and co-pays are going up," CNN says.

One new feature of Samaritan Ministries that gives members additional control of their health care is the availability of two membership levels. The original level, Samaritan Classic, offers a family of any size a monthly share of just \$495.

In fall 2017, a new membership level, Samaritan Basic, was launched, offering a lower monthly share, coupled with a higher initial unshared amount, giving members another way to choose what best fits their families—and their budgets. Monthly shares for Samaritan Basic start as low as \$100 for one person, \$200 for two people and \$250 for a family of any size, depending on age.

Each month, more than 75,000 member households and 246,000-plus individuals pray and send notes, cards and monthly financial shares directly to other member families. In this way, Samaritan members share \$25 million in medical needs each

month through an effective, affordable and God-honoring ministry for Christian families.

Visit Samaritan Ministries to calculate your monthly share and begin sending directly to a household in need each month!

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