

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND REVIEW

Series takes on healthcare

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The modern-day healthcare system leaves too many people at a loss – confused by their options and uncertain how to act.

That was the reasoning driving a group of reform-minded members of Cedars Unitarian Universalist Church to develop a new learning and discussion series, “The Moral Imperative of Health Care.”

“This is targeted at informing people...and also engaging them as citizens to go forward,” organizer Barbara Clarke said.

Clarke, who worked in managed care for many years, recalled numerous debates with colleagues over the question of whether healthcare was a “right or a privilege.”

“And I think it’s really moved beyond that,” she said. “When you see that women with breast cancer and no insurance have a 40 percent less chance of surviving, that’s moral. When you see a mother who can’t take her children to the doctor, that’s moral.”

The six-session workshop, which begins tomorrow and runs weekly through Feb. 17, will combine the reading of background articles with facilitated discussions, scenario-based role-playing and the sharing of stories, all with an aim to illuminate the state of healthcare on personal, political and institutional fronts.

A significant component, Clarke said, will be to train future facilitators to organize subsequent workshops. Ultimately, the group hopes to organize a large-scale public forum to be held in August at which community members and public officials work together to create healthcare reform.

“When informed citizens come together, they can create policy and affect change,” she said. Though the upcoming workshop is full, organizers are taking reservations for the next “Moral Imperative of Health Care” series. Contact Karen Scarvie at 780-0720 or Clarke at 780-0686.