

## 1935

- *The Committee on Economic Security reported to Congress on January 17, recommending federal old age insurance, federal-state public assistance, unemployment compensation, extension of public health services, maternal and child welfare services, and vocational rehabilitation services. There were no health insurance benefits.*
- *The Social Security Act was passed on August 14.*
- *To expedite the organization of the Social Security program, President Roosevelt appointed on August 15 an Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities. One activity the committee studied was the need for health care and health insurance.*
- *The first National Health Survey was begun.*

## 1936

- *The Technical Committee on Medical Care, a research arm of the Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities, was formed to study health care in the United States.*

## 1937

- *C. Rufus Rorem went to the AHA with a grant from the Julius Rosenwald Fund to study group hospitalization insurance. This resulted in the setting of standards for these groups.*

## 1938

- *A report of the Technical Committee on Medical Care was published in February under the title, A National Health Program.*
- *A National Health Conference was called in Washington, D.C., by the interdepartmental committee in July.*
- *The AMA, the District of Columbia Medical Society, the District of Columbia Academy of Surgery, the Harris County (Texas) Medical Society, and 21 individuals (including Morris Fishbein, editor of JAMA, and Olin West, secretary-general manager of the AMA) were indicted on the charge that organized medicine had denied hospital privileges to physicians associated with the Group Health Association of Washington by not allowing them to become members of local medical societies. The AMA won the case in lower court, but the case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in 1943 fined the AMA and the District of Columbia Medical Society and found the individuals and the other medical societies not guilty.*

- *The AHA decided on a seal of approval for hospital insurance prepayment plans: the AHA seal was superimposed on a blue cross. The term “Blue Cross” was in general use by 1942.*

- *Dr. Sidney R. Garfield set up a per capita prepaid medical and hospital plan for employees at the Kaiser Grand Coulee dam construction project (1938-1941).*

- *The California Physicians’ Service was started. This was an insurance forerunner of Blue Shield.*

## 1939

- *John R. Mannix founded the Michigan Blue Cross Plan. The plan was faced with the problem of providing national coverage for employees of such corporations as Ford Motor Company and General Motors. There was also a need for physician’s services to be covered by insurance. California was the only state trying to start such a plan. The Michigan State Medical Society was encouraged to start such a medical plan, and it did.*

- *Senator Robert F. Wagner (D-N.Y.) introduced a national health bill that incorporated the recommendations of the National Health Conference. The bill died in committee, after hearings.*

- *The National Physicians’ Committee for the Extension of Medical Service was formed to oppose Wagner’s national health bill. Ninety percent of the committee’s funding came from the pharmaceutical industry, the remaining 10 percent from individual physicians. The committee’s campaign literature was generally quite coarse and inaccurate in its facts. In 1948 the committee broadcast by mail a letter that could be construed as anti-Semitic. The effect was bad for the committee, and consequently it disbanded in 1951.*

- *The Federal Security Agency was set up to integrate the Social Security Board, the U.S. Public Health Service, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the U.S. Office of Education.*

## 1941

- *The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, causing the United States to enter World War II.*

## 1942

- *The Kaiser-Permanente Medical Care Program was established in California, based on the experience of Dr. Sidney Garfield in the California desert and at Grand Coulee dam.*

- *Rhode Island enacted the first cash sickness law, which provided temporary disability benefits to persons covered under state unemployment insurance law.*

- *The Beveridge report in Great Britain advocated a comprehensive social welfare system there.*

## 1943

- *George Bugbee became the executive secretary of the AHA.*
- *The Bishop resolution, calling for voluntary health insurance, was passed at the AHA convention.*
- *The Emergency Maternal and Infant Care Act was adopted by Congress to protect the dependents of the four lowest ranks of servicemen. It was administered by the Children's Bureau.*
- *President Roosevelt in a State of the Union speech called for social insurance from the cradle to the grave.*
- *The Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill was introduced in Congress. It called for comprehensive health insurance under Social Security. No action was taken on it.*

## 1944

- *New York City Mayor Fiorello La Guardia supported the Health Insurance Plan (HIP) by having the city pay part of the premiums for municipal workers.*
- *Michigan Blue Cross raised its family rate from \$2.00 a month to \$2.25.*
- *Franklin Roosevelt in his State of the Union address called for an economic bill of rights, including the right to adequate medical care.*
- *A Commission on Hospital Care, set up to study the state of hospitals and the care they provided, was established through the efforts of the AHA and the financial support of some foundations. Much of the data collected were useful in the writing of the Hospital Survey and Construction (Hill-Burton) Act.*
- *The Social Security Board in its annual report recommended compulsory national health insurance.*

## 1945

- *President Roosevelt in his State of the Union address called for good medical care.*
- *California Governor Earl Warren proposed compulsory state health insurance. The proposed bill was defeated in the legislature after the California Medical Society hired Whittaker & Baxter, a public relations firm, to campaign against it.*
- *President Roosevelt died in Warm Springs, Georgia, on April 12.*
- *President Harry S. Truman called for national health insurance in*

*a message to Congress in November. A revised Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill, asking for national health insurance, was introduced.*

## 1946

- *The Committee for the Nation's Health was organized to promote the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill.*

- *The Hospital Survey and Construction (Hill-Burton) Act was passed.*

- *John R. Mannix, president of the John Marshall Insurance Company, attempted to set up a group hospitalization plan offering coverage and service to employees of national corporations. The timing was unfortunate, because medical costs were rising faster than premiums could be increased. After two or three years the company was sold.*

- *The Taft-Smith-Ball bill to provide grants to states for medical aid to the poor was introduced in Congress. No action was taken.*

- *In a reorganization plan, the Social Security Board was abolished and its functions transferred to the federal security administrator, who established the Social Security Administration to carry on the programs of Social Security and the Children's Bureau (except for its child labor functions).*

## 1947

- *This year marked the centennial of the AMA.*

- *The Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill was reintroduced.*

- *President Truman urged Congress to enact a national health program.*

## 1948

- *Federal Security Administrator Oscar Ewing called a National Health Assembly in Washington, D.C., May 1-4. Its report endorsed contributory health insurance.*

- *Whittaker & Baxter, the California public relations firm, was hired by the AMA to work against Truman's and Ewing's plans for national health insurance.*

- *The Prall report on the state of education for hospital administration, with recommendations for the future, was published. The study was supported by a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.*

- *The Association of University Programs in Hospital Administration held its first meeting in Atlantic City.*