



## Inclusion, Independence & Dignity: Health care & people with disabilities

*Featuring Angela Gardner*

## THIS TIME ON CODE WACK!

***What policy solutions are needed to help people with disabilities get and keep quality health care - and which policies may do more harm than good? What would a Medicare for All system mean to this community?***

To find out, we spoke to **Angela Gardner**, a disability rights advocate who lives in the Los Angeles area. Angela is also a board member of Healthy California Now representing Hand in Hand, which fights for access to home care and disability justice, among other things.

***This is the second of two episodes with Angela.***

## SHOW NOTES

# WE DISCUSS

*Can you share a health policy solution that you believe would be especially helpful to people with disabilities, and why?*

"Medicare for All ... because it would provide access to health care, especially vision, dental, and mental health, which is much more difficult to access. And [people with disabilities would] not have to worry about the income cap and the income limits that prevent them from getting jobs for higher wages.

"They'd get to live independently in the community, getting the care at home that they need.

"Medicare for All would benefit people with disabilities the same as non-disabled people as far as getting access to health care that they're not currently getting or that's difficult to get." - **Angela Gardner**

*How would having universal, single-payer health care affect your life, personally, as someone who has autism and learning disabilities?*

"... I myself had [lived] without health care for many, many years. It wasn't until the Affordable Care Act that had a provision for adults with disabilities with no children that I was able to get Medicaid.

"It was stressful, you know, it was really hard. And so it was a big relief to be able to have health care.

"I think health care is essential for all of us and I would like to see everyone get covered, everyone have health care and the supports and services that they need." - **Angela Gardner**

## ***What can you tell us about the CARE court proposed by Governor Newsom and why it is so concerning to people with disabilities?***

"[That's] where homeless individuals with mental health care issues can be, you know, taken to court and possibly be put in conservatorship and institutionalized care, and they don't have the ability to make their own decisions. Disability Rights California tried to go to court and block this bill from getting enacted, but they were not successful. So, you know, that's another issue that ... homeless individuals with disabling mental health conditions are dealing with.

"... If you are in an emergency or in a mental health state of crisis, you cannot make decisions for yourself and until, you know, you get stabilized and get treatment.

"And so a lot of decisions are being made by the court system. It's getting the court system and the legal system involved in making decisions for individuals with disabilities instead of people with disabilities being able to make decisions about what's best for their own care and get access to treatment." – ***Angela Gardner***

## **Helpful Links**

**[Using Law and Policy to Promote Health for People with Disabilities in the United States](#)**, ***U.S. Department of Health & Human Services***

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**[Medicare for All Act of 2022 - Executive Summary](#)**

**[Disability Rights California](#)**

**[California's CARE Court](#)**

[Ask The Standard: Why Do Disability-Rights Groups Oppose CARE Court for Mentally Ill?](#), *The San Francisco Standard*

[Why we vehemently oppose the governor's 'CARE Court' proposal and so should you](#), *ACLU California Action*

[How to talk about disability sensitively and avoid ableist tropes](#), *NPR*

## Episode Transcript

Read the full [episode transcript](#).

## Biography: Angela Gardner

[Angela Gardner](#) is a disability rights advocate and former special education teacher.

She currently is a member of Hand in Hand, an organization that focuses on access to in-home care for people with disabilities and the workers/caregivers who provide care.

She is also an affiliate and board member of [Healthy California Now](#), a coalition of organizations that advocate for a universal, single-payer healthcare system for all.

Angela lives in Whittier, California, a city in Los Angeles County.

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