

The Health System at the End of the Universe

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don't panic



Hitchhiker's Guide to KT: 10 Lessons from 10 Years of Drug Benefit Policy Research

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with thanks to

Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research

“Lomas is right”

(A BIAS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION)

- KT is lobbying, albeit with evidence
- research funding can support policy
- linkage and exchange are key
- proximity to decision-makers is invaluable
- egos (and careers) may suffer

A DECADE LATER



- KT is lobbying
- research funding must support policy
- linkage and exchange are key
- proximity to decision-makers is necessary
- egos (and careers) still suffer

DEGREES OF OPPORTUNITY



- not all decision-makers are created equal
- not all research is of equal quality
- interest in research and decision skills are unrelated
- informed advice may conflict with “vision”



“WE DON’T DO KNOWLEDGE...”



- information without intelligence
- structural fragmentation
- uprooted innovation
- **unchanging diagnosis and prescription**

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at the end of the universe...

("Time For Transformative Change")



“Still, this group of senators is apparently convinced that if the federal government does more of the same for an open-ended period of time, the elusive goal of a more efficient health-care system will be reached.”

Chantal Hébert (2012) “Tories’ hands-off approach”

“nice country ... needs edits” (HITCHHIKING AS A METAPHOR)

- a sense of destination
- not unusual to be stuck for a long time
- great human beings, mostly
- a limited number of conversation topics

“ecological integrity”



- coherence
- adaptation
- mutual regulation
- responsibility

Bohmer (2011): specification, design, measurement, self-study

“nice country ... needs edits” (HITCHHIKING AS A METAPHOR)

- a sense of destination
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Picard's R_x



- primary care
 - drugs
 - home care
 - social determinants
 - quality
- + a generous dose of debate on funding and coverage

“nice country ... needs edits” (HITCHIKING AS A METAPHOR)

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Failures...



- to meet expectations
- to meet standards of quality
- to keep expenditures within expected range
- to answer calls for accountability

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SACRED COWS

(AND OTHER ADULT CONVERSATIONS)



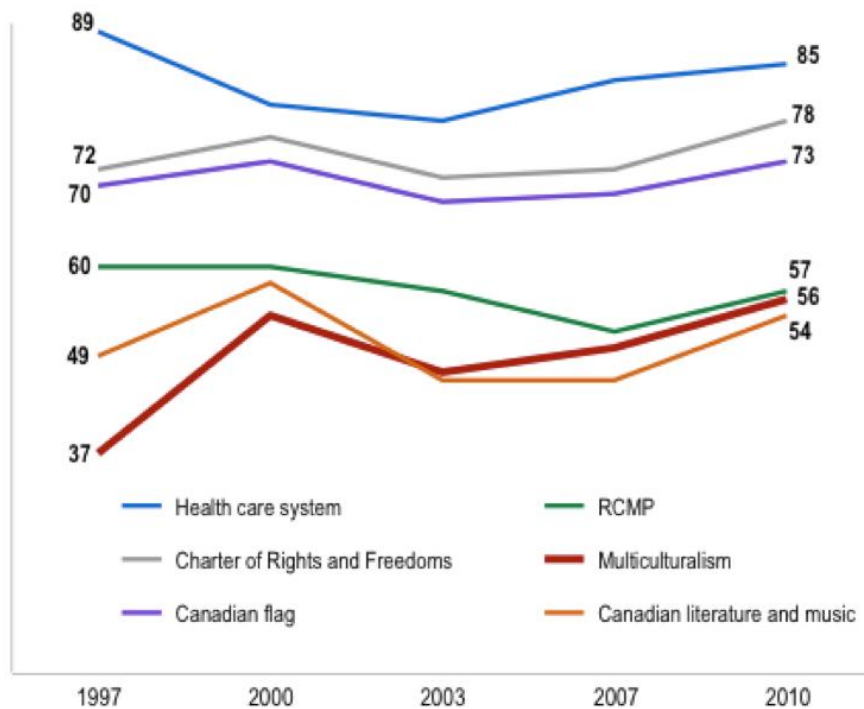
What if our relative lack of success in moving the health system in the right direction was in fact related to our indifference to the will and wants of the Canadian public?

“...THIS CHERISHED PROGRAM”



Very important symbol of Canadian identity

Top six symbols 1997 - 2010



Source: Focus Canada 2010

FC Q.20

OUR MONEY, OUR ACCOUNTS



- defining element of national identity
- the system belongs to the people
- the public knows more than we think
- no trust without accountability



Can't we buy change?



“Why isn't more happening?

To this outsider [...] policy seems paralyzed, with a paralysis that is largely self-induced.

Most striking is the apparent unwillingness of the [...] authorities to experiment, to try anything that isn't absolutely guaranteed to work.”

Ben Bernanke (2000) “Japanese Monetary Policy”

MOST REFORMS FAIL

(THE PULL OF GRAVITY)

- limited impact on care (Denis)
- proliferation of options and models (Brown)
- hybridation of systems (Tuohy)
- politics trumps policy (Lazar)

POLITICS MEETS POLICY



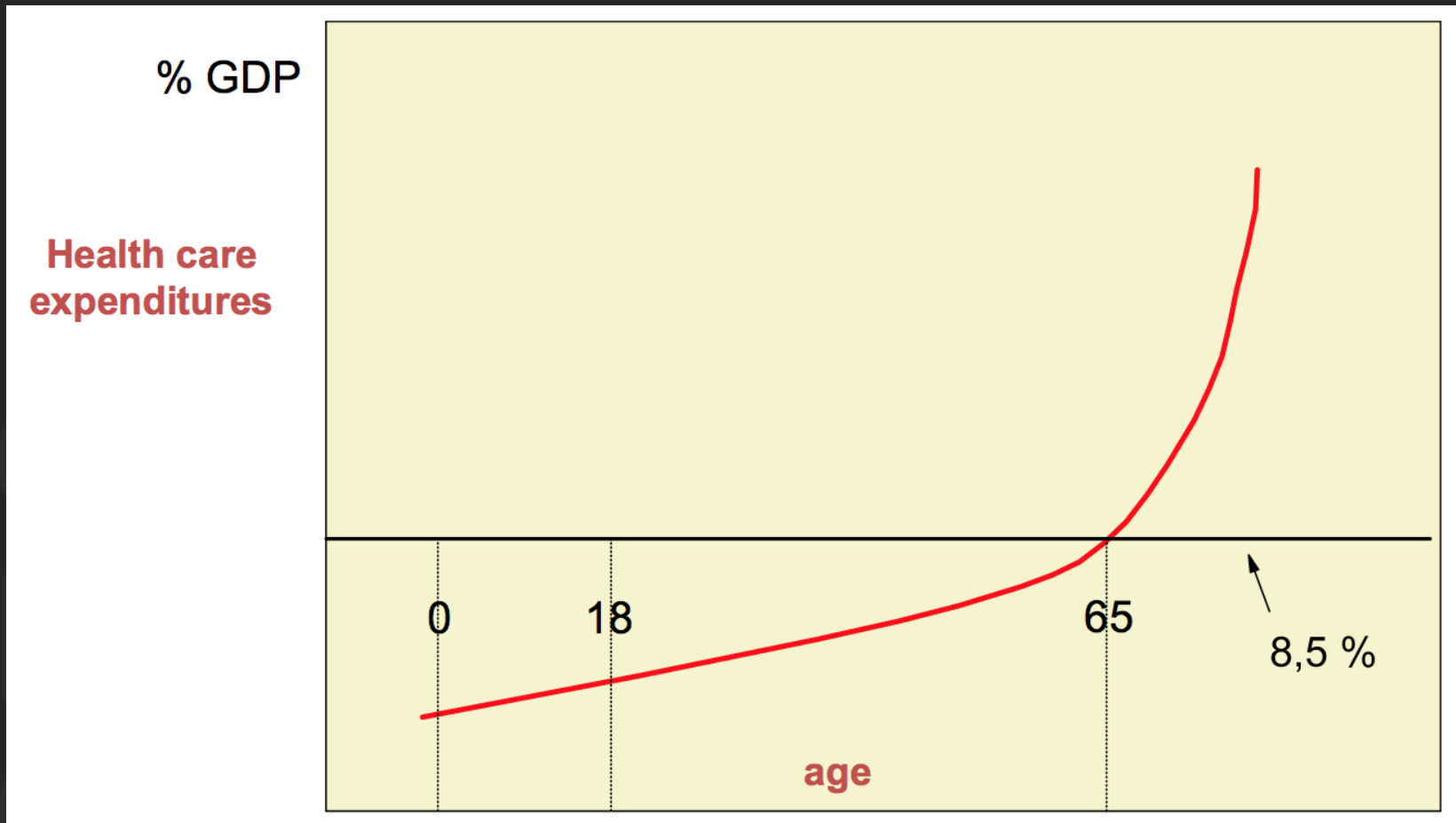
- problems with solutions
- solutions with benefits
- benefits without delays
- delays are not without advantages

TENSIONS

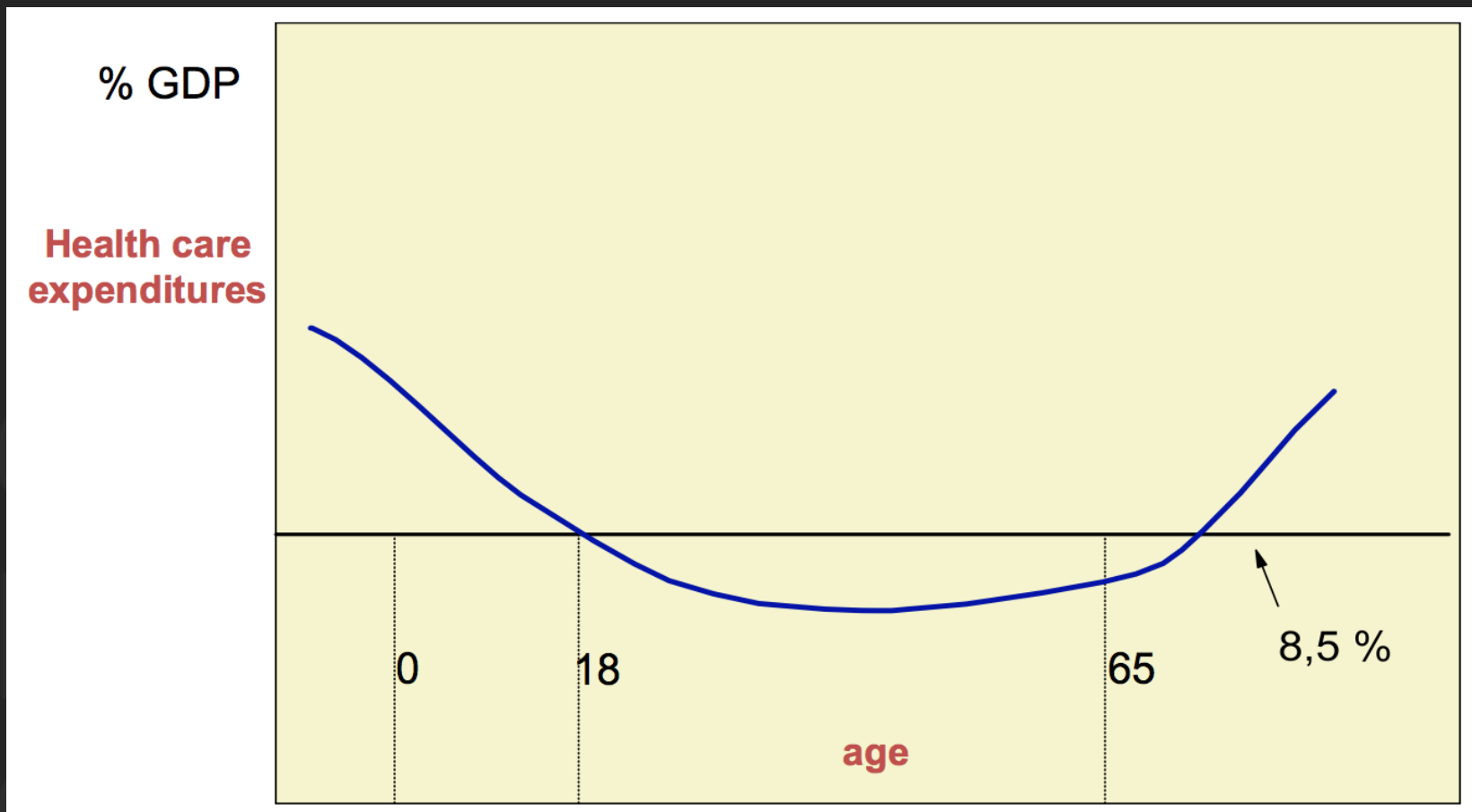


- between policy and decision
- between research and expertise
- between evidence *of* and evidence *for*

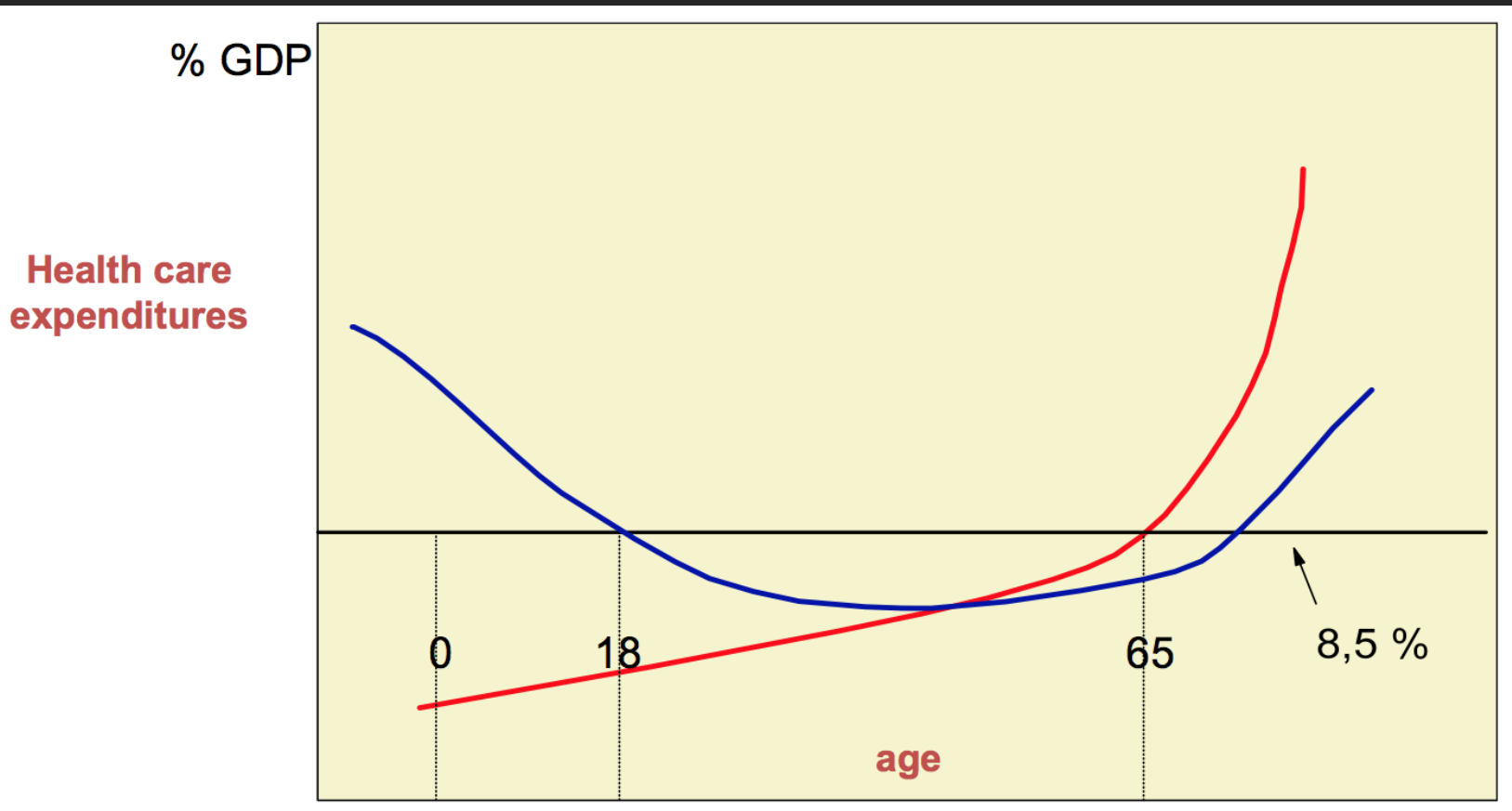
DEMAND DRIVES THE SYSTEM



THE IDEAL ALLOCATION



TWO CONFLICTING VISIONS



be careful what you wish for...

- national health service
- primus inter pares
- one among many
- real accountability

A NEW CONTEXT



- sustainable growth rate?
- global drivers?
- institutional leadership?
- **changing values?**

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THE END OF LIFEBOAT ETHICS



- new demand met haphazardly
- more fees and direct payments
- more options for queue jumpers
- “my heart, my health, my choice”

THIS CRISIS



- redistribution
- generational issues
- lack of deliberative space

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A CANADIAN BEVERIDGE REPORT

THREE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF RECOMMENDATIONS

6. In proceeding from this first comprehensive survey of social insurance to the next task—of making recommendations—three guiding principles may be laid down at the outset.

7. The first principle is that any proposals for the future, while they should use to the full the experience gathered in the past, should not be restricted by consideration of sectional interests established in the obtaining of that experience. Now, when the war is abolishing landmarks of every kind, is the opportunity for using experience in a clear field. A revolutionary moment in the world's history is a time for revolutions, not for patching.

8. The second principle is that organisation of social insurance should be treated as one part only of a comprehensive policy of social progress. Social insurance fully developed may provide income security; it is an attack upon Want. But Want is one only of five giants on the road of reconstruction and in some ways the easiest to attack. The others are Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness.

9. The third principle is that social security must be achieved by co-operation between the State and the individual. The State should offer security for service and contribution. The State in organising security should

THREE PRINCIPLES



1. not to be restricted by considerations of sectional interests
2. a comprehensive policy of social progress
3. cooperation between the State and the individual

end of the “healthcare illusion”

- social and moral dimensions
- micro and macro economic constraints
- priority-setting and rationing
- diversity of needs

HARD PROBLEMS (AND UNPLANNED INNOVATION)



- new issues
- new approaches
- new solutions
- debate and criticism

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UNICORNS



- patient-driven services
- user-defined package
- new professional landscape
- cost transparency
- value framework
- efficient and valued federalism
- [...]

PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU

(1919-2000)

“ [Policy analysts] would quickly lose their independence, and especially their usefulness, if they stopped to consider the enemies they might make by speaking out, or the doors that their words would close to them.”



SO LONG
AND THANKS
FOR ALL
THE FISH!