



November 2008

Health Care Reform is on the Move

The election results are in and the results are encouraging for supporters of health reform. President-elect Barack Obama has won a convincing victory. Exit polls suggest that health care remains very much on voters' minds in the midst of the economic downturn, with about two-thirds saying that they have concerns about their ability to afford health care.

This is a significant new opportunity to advance health reform at the federal level. Starting with our teleconference next week, the CVC national program office will be devoting significant resources to helping state partner organizations engage effectively in the national reform debate. In the meantime, here are a few preliminary ideas:

Tips for state advocates in this era of national health reform: do's and don'ts

- Don't give up on your state efforts.
- Do set up meetings with your national delegation.
- Don't get too bogged down in the details of national reform.
- Do identify the key issues that are "make or break" for your constituency and your organization.
- Do be sure you have a clear process for organizational decision making regarding national reform.
- Don't try to do everything yourself.
- Do reach out to other stakeholders.
- Do engage with state and local political leaders on national reform.
- Do develop a calendar of outreach events that can help you build your grassroots base.
- Do prepare for requests for consumers willing and able to talk about health care issues.
- Don't set yourself or your base up for failure by assuming that everything will happen quickly or all at once.

More information will soon be available when Community Catalyst releases "Getting Ready for National Health Care Reform: a Handbook for State Advocates." Please stay tuned!

Also, Nonprofit Quarterly has a great article outlining strategies used by President-elect Obama's campaign that can help nonprofit organizations, ["In a Successful Campaign: Lessons for Nonprofits."](#)

ANNOUNCING Consumer Voices for Coverage Phase II

Community Catalyst and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation have initiated a second phase of the Consumer Voices for Coverage program.

Rather than focusing on state-level advocacy and policymaking, this project is aimed at advancing efforts to achieve health reform at the national level.

This program will provide state-based consumer advocates with the skills, expertise and resources needed to have a stronger presence and play a more meaningful role in the national health reform debate.

CVC Phase II began on November 1st and is partnering with advocacy organizations in six states: Iowa, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah.

Resources developed for CVC Phase II focusing on the national reform debate will also be available to CVC Phase I grantees.

Communications Plans are due December 1st.

See the extranet for the template and sample plans. Contact your field coordinator if you need assistance or have any questions.

New Resource for Faith-based Organizing

Community Catalyst has contracted with the Rev. Linda Walling, executive director of Faithful Reform in Health Care, to assist in efforts to engage, educate and empower faith-based health care reform advocates.

Walling will chair a conference call in January to connect the CVC state networks of faith partners to each other.

Faithful Reform in Health Care will offer individual assistance to interested grantees and their leadership teams. This one-on-one guidance is a mix of educational, networking and advocacy assistance that can connect religious values to health care reform initiatives both at the state and federal level.

Voices for Health Care

UHCAN Ohio has been involved in Voices for Health Care, a multi-state effort engaging leaders and the public in working through alternatives for health care reform.

Voices for Health Care has sponsored a series of public dialogues and stakeholder sessions in three states (Kansas, Mississippi, Ohio) in 2008. The project's goal is to identify commonalities and approaches to sustainable reform that all can support.

The Voices for Health Care online dialogue gives participants a valuable opportunity to connect with fellow citizens, grapple with the choices and tradeoffs in health care reform, and help improve health care for all Americans. It enables hundreds of people with very different views to participate in an electronic dialogue. www.voicesforhealthcare.org is sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Upcoming Conference Calls

**Nov. 21 (2:00PM EST)
National Health Reform:
What state advocates can
do**

Dec. 2 (tentative)
**Webinar on RWJ
Small Business Polling
Results**

**Dec. 15 (2:00PM EST)
Planning for year 2 of your
CVC funding [CVC Grantees
only]**

**Dec. 8 (2:00PM EST)
Modeling Health Care
Reform Plans**

**Jan. 7 (2:00PM EST)
Deepening our Engagement
in Faith Communities [CVC
Grantees and leadership
team members]**

**Jan. 29 (5:30 - 7:00PM)
CVC Cocktail Hour at
Families USA National
Meeting**

Spotlight on Anthony Wright

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Anthony Wright has served as the executive director for Health Access California since 2002. Health Access has been a leader in state and national efforts to fight health care budget cuts while advancing comprehensive health reform and coverage expansions.



Under his leadership, California Health Access successfully advocated for a law against hospital overcharging of the uninsured and pushed for a prescription drug discount program.

Before joining Health Access, Anthony worked for New Jersey Citizen Action, the Center for Media Education, The Nation magazine, and in Vice President Al Gore's administration.

Born and raised in the Bronx, Anthony graduated from Amherst College. He lives with his wife, Jessica, his son, Jefferson, and his two cats, Patience and Fortitude.

Health Access Shares Report on 2007 Health Reform Efforts

After several years opposing major coverage expansions, Gov. Schwarzenegger labeled 2007 "The Year of Health Reform." To take advantage of the opportunity, "It's OUR Healthcare" (IOHC) campaign was launched to press for the urgency of reform and serve as the voice of health care consumers. The coalition grew to over 100 member organizations statewide representing 10 million Californians.

IOHC worked closely with other existing stakeholders and coalitions to promote health reform, engaged in policy discussions with legislative and administration leaders, and organized local field campaigns to connect consumers with policymakers.

While comprehensive health reform did not ultimately pass due to political and budget issues, an IOHC report highlights the activities, successes, and challenges of the campaign. The report has not been released publicly, but it is available to CVC grantees on the extranet in "California" (www.community.voicesforcoverage.org).

While IOHC started as a one year campaign, it has continued as we see a new window of opportunity in the next few years.