



Accessible, Affordable, Guaranteed Health Care for ALL

Inform ★ Implement ★ Improve

The recent passage of federal health care reform, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), is historic and will have a positive impact on nearly all Illinoisans, whether they are one of the 1.8 million uninsured, among the underserved, or those with insurance.

Like previous social justice achievements such as Social Security and Medicare, PPACA sets a strong foundation upon which we can build. Because we understand that success for PPACA rests with effective implementation at the state level, the Health Care Justice Campaign has now shifted our strategic policy and grassroots focus to Springfield and policy makers throughout the state.

Even before the ink had dried on President Obama's signature on this landmark reform, the Health Care Justice Campaign (HCJC) proposed the Health Care Justice Implementation Act, which was recently signed into law by Governor Quinn. Through it, the actions delegated to state-level entities (state departments, insurance regulators, and legislators) by PPACA can be tracked and monitored to make sure that they are timely, fully funded and implemented, and have the intended results.

The proponents of "do nothing" and the status quo will continue to wage an aggressive misinformation campaign to thwart implementation, with the ultimate goal of repeal. We've build a powerful network of organizations, providers, congregations, and individuals that has had a major impact on health care policy here in Illinois and contributed to the success of PPACA at the national level. All of us who have educated our neighbors and families, our co-workers and our legislators, can be proud of that accomplishment. Now, we must stay the course until 2014 to make sure that the promise of health care for all becomes a reality.

HCJC's strategic vision -- *Inform, Implement and Improve* -- will provide the framework for our policy, education, organizing, and advocacy work for the next four years.

Inform . . .

Illinois residents are desperately in need of accurate information on the true impacts that PPACA will have on their ability to access health care. They also need to be reassured by being shown that the claims of "death panels" and other scare tactics are dishonest fear mongering.

Health Care Justice Campaign's targeted educational outreach will have two tracks:

- Specific educational efforts targeting specific constituents (low income, uninsured, small businesses, seniors, faith communities, communities of color, unions, chronic illness organizations, etc.)
- Outreach to the general public through electronic communications and earned media (press conferences, story bank, letters-to-the-editor and an expanded Helpline).

A Project of the Campaign for Better Health Care

Central/Statewide • 44 E. Main St., # 414 • Champaign, IL 61820 • 217.352.5600 • (f) 217.352.5688
Chicago • 1325 S. Wabash Ave., # 305 • Chicago, IL 60605 • 312.913.9449 • (f) 312.913.9559

Next Steps: Already we are: conducting educational forums throughout the state; presenting a simple and easy-to-understand power point to organizations (and training others to present it), distributing fact sheets of material developed for specific constituent groups; and expanding our Story Bank to document how reform is already helping people to access health care. This effort will evolve to address each aspect of PPACA as it is implemented.

Implement . . .

Passing reform was a historic achievement, but making sure that it is effectively implemented in Illinois during these difficult economic and political times will be tough. If corners are cut or new barriers put in the way for consumers, small businesses, and providers, the promise of reform will have been compromised. We must pursue a federal/state strategic focus to keep implementation on track:

- At the Federal level, the repeal movement is gearing up to try to block PPACA's funding every year in Congress, using filibusters and other tactics. We must keep our Congressional delegation engaged and opposing any such rear-guard action.
- At the State level, the opponents of reform will maneuver to weaken the scope and scale of reform measures. We will make sure that State Senators, House members, and regulatory agencies hear even more strongly from their reform-supporting constituents.

Next Steps: Strategic implementation working groups inside and outside of state government will need to be established to address issues like insurance regulation and the benefit packages that should be included in Illinois' insurance exchange. HCJC will also broaden the engagement of other Illinois organizations and expand the support of our national partners. We're retooling our Helpline and Story Bank to make sure that there is an independent source of information, constant monitoring of problems, and effective highlighting of success stories. These stories are coming from consumers, small businesses, providers and others.

Improve . . .

Our work does not end with PPACA as it is currently framed. We are committed to building upon this federal reform to make sure that everyone is covered, that consumers and their health care providers are in charge, and that we move to a health care system that is driven by public health rather than by financial gain. Stronger regulation of the insurance industry and creation of a public option are needs that must be addressed.

Change does not come easily or in one single legislative act. We know that success breeds success, and we know that HCJC's mission will not be complete until health care justice is realized for all.