



HEALTHY LOUISIANA

Families without access to healthcare are less likely to receive needed and preventive medical care. They are more likely to face serious barriers in obtaining recommended treatment, experience lower-quality care and face worse health outcomes. Healthcare costs are rising. HEALTHY LOUISIANA wants to reduce the disparities in access to healthcare and improve health outcomes.

What are steps for reform we can agree on and then seek solutions from our representatives?

Indicate where your interests lie as we move forward with a plan for change. **Check the box where you “agree” with the issue raised herein.**

A PLATFORM FOR CHANGE

GOAL #1: IMPROVE ENROLLMENT RATES IN HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS

About 12 million Americans are uninsured but eligible for government-provided programs like Medicaid, Medicare and LaCHIP (Children’s Health Insurance Program). Too many of these adults and children live in Louisiana. Our goal is to work smarter to enroll those currently eligible for these programs into existing plans.

SOLUTIONS TO EXPLORE:

- Give states incentives and reduce administrative barriers to enroll in public plans
- Establish ‘express lane’ enrollment—allow to apply for health care while applying for food stamps, free/reduced school lunches
- Invest federal funds for state outreach and enrollment
- Partner with private sector to “develop innovative enrollment approaches”

GOAL #2: IMPROVE WORKER INSURANCE COVERAGE

5 million working Americans are eligible for but not enrolled in employer-sponsored coverage. Costs for coverage far outpace employee wage increases. How do we stop workers in Louisiana from “opting out” of coverage?

SOLUTIONS TO EXPLORE:

- Expand private coverage through credits for small, low-wage employers and low/moderate income individuals
- Allow states to implement ‘premium assistance programs’ for low and moderate-income workers
- Assure comprehensive coverage (including coverage for generic and brand prescription medicines)
- Create new group pooling mechanisms and insurance reforms to promote enhanced choice, access, and affordability of coverage
- Ensure guaranteed availability of private health insurance regardless of health-status

Comprehensive health system reforms are also needed to assure greater affordability, value, and quality in care. Reducing and preventing chronic diseases, reducing and eliminating disparities, encouraging the use of evidence-based medicine and comparative clinical effectiveness research, as well as promoting greater adoption of health information technology is key.

GOAL: RETOOLING POLICIES TO BETTER ADDRESS PREVENTION

Early intervention and secondary prevention of chronic disease can reduce ‘catastrophic expenditures’ and thus reduce healthcare costs. Medicines keep people out of long-term care, and yet some plans don’t offer prescription drug coverage. How can reduce at-risk, costly behaviors?

SOLUTIONS TO EXPLORE:

- Greater emphasis on prevention, especially confronting obesity, which is often accompanied with high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes
- Promote wellness programs and healthy lifestyles in the private sector; encourage with tax credits where appropriate
- Early care intervention to identify and mitigate progression of unpreventable diseases (for example: regular screening mammography can reduce breast cancer deaths by one-third)
- Improve care coordination for chronic conditions
- Establish public-private National Commission on Chronic Care Management to examine and develop research concerning how different approaches to organizing, delivering, and managing evidence-based interventions work to support practicing physicians
- Encourage medication therapy management programs (MTMP) in Medicare.
- Invest in interoperable health information technology (HIT) to provide clinicians with real-time access to data and tools to deliver high-quality care based on the best available data; also, as a facet of HIT, e-prescribing
- Enhance transparency of health care quality and cost information, allowing informed decisions by consumers and improvements throughout the health care system

GOAL #4: ADDRESS HEALTHCARE DISPARITIES

Studies have shown that far too many racial and ethnic minorities fail to receive recommended treatment and care, even after accounting for socio-economic factors, such as insurance-status.

SOLUTIONS TO EXPLORE:

- Encourage medical homes among insurers to help assure access to regular preventative care
- Improve 'cultural competency', i.e., reduce communications problems and support education for under-represented minorities in health professions
- Research root causes of disparities
- Fund prevention initiatives targeted to ethnic audiences
- Reduce uninsured rate among ethnic and racial minorities

GOAL #5: AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH PROMOTES RESEARCH

The public policy environment must support innovation, including intellectual property incentives, market-based valuation of product and an effective drug approval process, in order to insure that quality healthcare is indeed a system-level issue.

SOLUTIONS TO EXPLORE:

- Assure that more potentially life-saving and life-enhancing medicines and treatments get to patients as soon as possible, without compromising safety/quality, ala FDA's 'critical path' initiative
- Sustain federal funding for basic research
- Increase federal investment in education/training of next generation of scientists
- Strengthen education in the basic sciences
- Facilitate continued collaborations between universities and life science companies

Thank you for taking the time to indicate where your interests lie in the healthcare reform discussion. Please indicate how we may contact you in the future:

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____ City, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

This is a presentation of the Louisiana Health Access Network, a state non-profit representing more than 700 healthcare providers and advocates. We are headquartered at 3418 Coliseum St., NOLA 70115 (504) 897-6152, Cheron Brylski, Director.