

UTAH HEALTH POLICY PROJECT

HEALTH MATTERS



***Health Matters* E-Newsletter**

September 19, 2011

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MEDICAID REFORM

[REVISED WAIVER SIGN-ON LETTER OPEN FOR ENDORSEMENTS, POST INPUT FROM PROVIDER GROUPS](#)

Following last week's invitation to endorse a sign-on letter to CMS with recommendations for Utah's Medicaid ACO waiver, we received several requests for additions or changes to the letter—a few from key provider groups. We found most of these changes so worthwhile that we would actually like to circulate [a revised letter](#) and re-start the sign-on campaign.

To summarize the changes:

- They give the letter a softer, more conciliatory tone, but without minimizing the concerns raised in the original. This will help us have a seat at the waiver negotiation table.
- CMS has had 4 phone meetings with the state: while CMS officials share many of our concerns related to cost sharing and benefit standards, they are sympathetic to the overall direction and intent of the waiver and ACO proposal. Against this background, we think we will do best to focus on improving the waiver in the concrete ways outlined in the revised letter—and not rejecting the waiver outright.

Please take a look at [the revisions](#) and see if you agree. If you like [this new letter](#), please sign on by **end of day September 28**, so that we can maximize the letter's impact.

ACCOUNTABLE CARE INTENSIVE WORKSHOP A SUCCESS...DETAILS TO FOLLOW

A week ago UHPP and the Medicaid Reform Leadership Team hosted an intensive workshop on accountable care ([ACOs](#) are groups of health care providers who agree to be held accountable for improving health care quality while lowering costs). featuring local and national experts on accountable care. The purpose of the workshop was to strategize (via common vocabulary, shared concepts, lessons from Utah and elsewhere) how to pivot from the waiver to a meaningful transition to accountable care & payment/delivery system reform. On our [Medicaid Reform Central](#) webpage we've posted [highlights](#) and [additional resources](#) from this important event. In the meantime, please enjoy the resource kit and speaker biographies from this session. At the session we heard good news from the new Medical Director for Utah Medicaid, Dr. Joseph Cramer: CMS has rejected the waiver's proposal to increase cost sharing for children and pregnant women! This part of the proposal is off the table. Of course, this could leave other Medicaid groups like people with disabilities, parents, and low-income parents even more vulnerable to higher cost sharing obligations. This means we will need to be vigilant and fully engaged in the waiver negotiation process—*see above, Revised Waiver Sign-On Letter*.

MAKING THE MOST OF THE SEPTEMBER INTERIM SESSION

EXECUTIVE APPROPRIATIONS (LEADERSHIP)

Meets at 1:00 on Tuesday, September 20 in room 445 State Capitol.

The committee will be discussing Medicaid consensus forecasting and a report on the Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS). the Department of Insurance will also report on the regulation of health plans under the Affordable Care Act. For more information about the interim Executive Appropriations Committee, click [here](#).

HEALTH + HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) INTERIM

Meets at 9:00 am on Wednesday, September 21 at the University of Utah Medical Center in the Hospital Large Conference Room W1220.

The committee will be discussing prescription drug abuse and related policy options. The committee will also be touring the Emergency Department and AirMed operations.

BUSINESS + LABOR INTERIM

There are no health-related issues on the B+L agenda this month.

HEALTH SYSTEM REFORM TASK FORCE

Meets at 2:00 on Wednesday, September 21 in room 450 State Capitol.

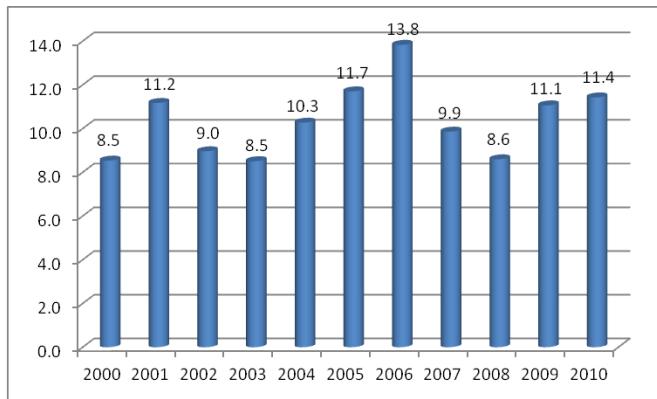
Utah's Health System Reform Task Force will be hearing a presentation about Spiritual Care and discussing issues relevant to federal health reform law and health insurance exchanges—including essential benefits, multi-state exchanges, and dental benefits. For more information about the Health System Reform Task Force click [here](#).

MEDIA RELEASE

NUMBER OF UNINSURED AMERICANS & UTAHNS CONTINUE TO RISE, US CENSUS BUREAU SHOWS

More Americans did not have any sort of health insurance coverage in 2010 (49.9 million) compared to 2009 (49 million) according to the US Census Bureau report “Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010” released last week. Over the same period the number of Utahns without health insurance increased slightly, from 11.1% in 2009 to 11.4% in 2010—despite the fact that the state is entering year 4 of state health reform.

PERCENT OF UTAHNS WHO ARE UNINSURED



Read the full release [HERE](#).

ON THE FEDERAL FRONT

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: HOW ARE IMMIGRANTS IN UTAH IMPACTED? [New UHPP brief!](#)

The health care and insurance changes in the ACA will impact all categories of immigrants—naturalized citizens, legal immigrants, undocumented immigrants, and refugees—and their children. The new consumer protections and opportunities for access to health care for immigrants go a long way in ensuring they have access to the health care they need. However, the law does not

eliminate the Medicaid 5-year waiting period for immigrants with undocumented status, making our safety net health care providers, like Community Health Centers vital. In addition, plain language materials and language and culturally competent consumer assistance will be necessary for immigrants of all statuses when navigating the new health insurance exchanges and premium tax credits (subsidies), and applying for coverage through public programs (like Medicaid and CHIP).

ON THE STATE FRONT

CONSUMER PROTECTION IN RATE REVIEW: INSTALLMENT #3 OF OUR COST CONTAINMENT SERIES

New UHPP Fact Sheet!

Hot off the press, UHPP just published a [new fact sheet about Insurance Premium Rate Review](#). Beginning this month (September 1, 2011) insurance companies must publish and justify all proposed premium hikes of 10% or more for the individual and small group markets, and state insurance departments must review them. This is part of the nation's health law as established by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In order for rate review to help consumers, Utah's Department of Insurance (DOI) needs both the authority and resources to do so. HB128 (Rep. Dunnigan) gives our insurance department the responsibility to review rates but not the authority to do anything about non-compliant insurers. Utah accepted a \$1 million [federal grant](#) last year to prepare for this new task and now have the staff needed to review 100% of all rate filings.

There's a lot of work to yet be done to build strong consumer protection into Utah's rate review process: Utah's rate review process must be transparent, include a forum for public comment, and grant Utah's DOI authority to enforce its decisions.

If your insurance company issued you an unreasonable premium increase you can make a complaint to the Department of Insurance, either online at <http://www.insurance.utah.gov/complaint/index.html> or by phone 1-800-439-3805. Have you issued a complaint and are not satisfied with the outcome? Share your story with UHPP—send an email to shelly@healthpolicyproject.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW UHPP ISSUE BRIEFS

[THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: HOW ARE IMMIGRANTS IN UTAH IMPACTED](#) *New UHPP brief!*

[HEALTH INSURANCE RATE REVIEW: PROTECTING CONSUMERS FROM SKYROCKETING HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS](#) *New UHPP Fact Sheet!*

DISABILITY LAW CENTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Please help the [Disability Law Center](#) with their 2011 Community Needs Assessment by filling out their survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2011-DLC-SURVEY>

The survey will help the Center understand the issues impacting Utahns with disabilities as well as provide the DLC with critical feedback about programs and services. The survey is anonymous and should take less than 10 minutes to complete. The survey is open until September 25, 2011. Pass the link along to friends, families, and colleagues!

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Utah Medicaid Partnership (UMP)

UMP's next meeting will be scheduled back-to-back with our next conference call with CMS (federal agency that oversees Medicaid). CMS is about to give us the date for that, so please stay tuned for a separate announcement. In the meantime, please prepare to share your Medicaid policy and funding priorities for the 2012 General Session of the Utah Legislature.

U-SHARE

Tuesday, September 20, 11:30-1:00 at the Catholic Diocese, 27 C Street, Bishop Federal Room.

Monthly Meeting + Special MyCase Training in September!

On **September 27 2:00-3:30 pm** UHPP is sponsoring a special training on MyCase (the consumer's or customer's interface with E-REP, Utah's electronic eligibility system). What makes it special is that it includes discussion of the MyCase interface and how we can make it better for Utahns from all walks of life. To sign up and get location, send email to kim@healthpolicyproject.org (space is limited/first come, 1st served).

Remember that Monthly Meeting happens *every other* month, according to this schedule...

- October 5 (at DOH)
- December 7 (at DWS)
- February 1 (at DOH)

We find Monthly Meetings are most productive when topics are generated by the community!

Please email ideas for DWS topics to Gina Cornia of Utahns Against Hunger: cornia@uah.org; health topics to Stacey at Utah Health Policy Project stacey@healthpolicyproject.org; crossover topics to both and to lincoln@utahchildren.org.

Get the Minutes from August 3, 2011 [here](#).

UHPP IS HIRING!

First, please join us in congratulating Kim Myers on her new position at UHPP: Director of Take Care Utah, UHPP's new consumer health assistance program and collaboration with United Way of Salt Lake and its Collective Impact coalitions in the neighborhoods around Title I schools. Her position is posted until September 2, 2011.

[**Now Hiring: Community Engagement Director**](#)

[**Now Hiring: Enrollment Specialist for Take Care Utah**](#)

