



Children's Health Care Priorities in Health Reform

“Fix what's broken and build on what works”

Successful health reform will ensure that all children have access to high-quality, affordable health care that meets their unique developmental and health care needs. We are pleased to see that current health reform proposals work to expand affordable health coverage, access, and quality for parents and other adults, as there is a clear link between how children fare and the health and stability of their parents. Health reform must also address the millions of children who remain uninsured and who are not getting the care they need to grow and thrive. Children can not be forgotten in health care reform or be left worse off than they are now.

Access to Comprehensive Coverage and Services

We urge Congress to enact legislation that features a comprehensive pediatric benefit package for all children regardless of their source of coverage. Both public and private plans must provide an inclusive benefit package for all of our children—particularly children from low-income families and those with special health care needs—that includes preventive services, medical care, and oral and mental health benefits. Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT), the benefit standard available to children enrolled in Medicaid, effectively outlines these necessary services and should serve as a model for pediatric benefit packages in national health reform. In order to ensure that all children can access the care they need, national health reform must guarantee that:

- **Medicaid** has an eligibility floor of at least 150 percent FPL and currently enrolled children are not transferred into the Exchange unless the coverage and cost-sharing protections they receive are as strong as those in Medicaid.
- **The Exchange** provides all children with a comprehensive benefit package.
- **CHIP** is maintained as a wrap-around program that guarantees all children up to 300 percent FPL the same benefits and cost-sharing protections available in Medicaid. If Congress allows CHIP to expire, children transitioning into Exchange plans must receive equivalent benefits and cost-sharing protections.
- **Provider rates** are adequate and predictable for Medicaid providers who treat children to ensure an adequate supply of pediatric caregivers.

Medical Homes

We urge Congress to expand access to and support the development of state-wide, multi-payer medical home programs that address the unique needs of children. Medical homes are designed to offer coordinated, quality care which will improve the health of children and can lead to cost savings and efficiencies in the health care system.

Affordability

We urge Congress to ensure that health care is affordable for everyone by providing subsidies up to at least 400 percent FPL. Children must have access to affordable health coverage; subsidies are an essential component of making health coverage affordable for families.