

Health Care Reform: What it means for communities of color

Ellen Wu, MPH
Executive Director



California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

Benefits for California's Communities of Color

- 2.78 million low-income uninsured people of color will be newly eligible for coverage through Medicaid or subsidies in the Exchange
 - 81% uninsured African Americans
 - 60% uninsured Latinos
 - 60% uninsured Asian/Pacific Islanders
 - 750,000 Californians with limited-English proficiency

Source: "National Health Reform Proposals Hold Promise for California's Communities of Color"

CPEHN, November 21, 2009

Health Disparities provisions

- Establishes individual OMH's in seven HHS agencies
 - Existing OMH & CDC, HRSA, SAMHSA, CMS, AHRQ, FDA
 - Each agency must issue a report to HHS Secretary on disparities
- Develops a national strategy for improving health care quality by January 2011
- Improves and standardizes collection of race, ethnicity, and primary language data in public programs
 - HHS must finalize regulations within two years of passage
 - HHS will annually analyze reported data for disparities & make the data publicly available

Language Access

- Exchanges must provide information on insurance options in a linguistically appropriate manner
- Proposal for California's Exchange: AB 1602 (Perez)
- Incorporate language access into implementing regulations
 - Definition of mandated benefits (CMS)

Prevention

- Medicare and private insurers required to offer free preventive care as defined by U.S. Preventive Services Task Force
- Nutrient/calorie menu labeling for fast food chains
 - California law goes into effect first, Jan 2011
 - Federal law includes drive through boards, cafeteria & buffet lines, vending machines
 - National regulations must be developed within a year of implementation
- Corporate wellness programs
 - Tax credits to businesses that establish employee wellness programs, starting 2011
 - In 2014 businesses will be able to offer employees a 50% discount on health insurance if they participate in corporate wellness policy

Prevention *(continued)*

- Prevention and Public Health Fund
 - \$15 billion over 10 years
 - \$500 million in 2010, then increases up to \$2 billion annually
 - CMS (likely CDC) will publish rules, RFPs in upcoming months
 - ***Community Transformation Grants***
 - Unspecified portion of the total \$15 billion
 - State and local agencies and non-profits eligible