



# What I Like about Health Care Reform

People of faith are at the heart of our country's health care past and present. Because we affirm that health and health care are integral to the wholeness of body and spirit, we:

- Build and administer hospitals/clinics
- Provide pastoral care and counseling
- Support charity care for the uninsured and under-insured
- Pray for those broken by sickness and disease
- Train health professionals
- Teach wellness and prevention
- Sponsor substance-abuse programs
- Maintain health ministries
- Host health fairs for our communities



When the Affordable Care Act was signed into law on March 23, 2010, the foundation was laid on which our nation can finally build a health system that includes everyone and works well for all of us. We took the first steps toward a vision of a more compassionate and just health care future that contributes to the common good.

## “A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”

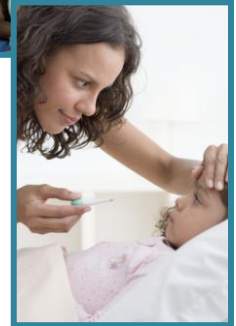


“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care” was a guide for people of faith in their reflections upon health care reform legislation. It begins by affirming our vision of a society where each person is afforded health, wholeness, and human dignity; it describes a system of health care that is that is *inclusive, affordable, accessible and accountable*. This Vision Statement continues to provide insights into our consideration of health care reform and what the new law means for us both as individuals and our national community as a whole.

(over)

# What I Like about Health Care Reform

Since health care reform became law on March 23, 2010, we already have made progress in our journey to make our system of health care more...



## Inclusive

**VISION:** Health care is a shared responsibility that is grounded in our common humanity.

- Children under age 19 can no longer be denied coverage because of pre-existing conditions.
- Young adults up to age 26 can stay on parents' policies that go into effect after 9/23/10, unless they are offered coverage at work.

## Affordable

**VISION:** Health care must contribute to the common good by being affordable for individuals, families and society as a whole.



- Senior adults are receiving rebate checks when they reach the gap (doughnut hole) in their prescription drug coverage.
- Key preventive care, such as mammograms, colonoscopies, immunizations, pre-natal and new baby care will be covered without co-pays or deductibles in new plans after 9/23/10.

- Prior authorization cannot be required for emergency care; higher costs cannot be imposed for out-of-network emergency care in new plans after 9/23/10.
- Small businesses are receiving tax credits for providing health care benefits for their workers.
- 46 states are using resources under the new reform law to pass or strengthen premium rate review laws.

## Accessible

**VISION:** All persons should have access to health services that provide necessary care and contribute to wellness.

- Women now have direct access to OB/GYNs without a referral.
- Enrollees in new plans after 9/23/10 must have a choice of primary care physicians.
- Lifetime limits on insurance payouts will be eliminated, and annual limits will be greatly restricted.
- Expanded funding for community health centers will increase access to medical care in under-served areas.
- Persons who have been uninsured for 6 months because of pre-existing conditions now have access to Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plans

## Accountable

**VISION:** Our health care system must be accountable, offering a quality, equitable and sustainable means of keeping us healthy as individuals and as a community.

- Insurance companies can no longer drop people from coverage because of illness.
- Members of Congress and their staff members will receive their health insurance from the same exchanges.
- Persons will have the right to external appeals of decisions made by insurers.

## Hope for Our Health Care Future

Passing the new law is a beginning – not an end. Transforming our broken system of health care will require the same kind of vision and investment that led to modernizing other systems in our country's infrastructure. We created a power grid, phone systems, water systems, and interstate highways that improved our life together and served the common good. Society as a whole, and the individuals within it, flourished. Our health system, however, still operates with the equivalent of individual generators, scattered wells, and meandering roads. With a new vision and a shared commitment to fulfill it, we can create a health care system that sustains our collective well-being. The Affordable Care Act is the first step of this journey.

"A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care," developed by the Faithful Reform in Health Care coalition, was signed by hundreds of organizations and thousands of individuals. The full text is available at <http://www.FaithfulReform.org>.

Clinical pictures on the front page are courtesy of Sisters of Charity Health System St. Vincent Charity Medical Center in Cleveland, OH, and the UMMA Community Clinic in Los Angeles, CA.

"The Heart in Health Care Reform" is a project of the Faithful Reform in Health Care coalition to help people of faith understand how health care reform moves us toward a more compassionate health care future that affords health, wholeness, and human dignity for all.