



THE HEART

in Health Care Reform

Reflections on

“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”

and Health Care Reform

April 2010

Presented by: Faithful Reform in Health Care

A tale of 2 sons



Imagine a healthy **insured** person who suddenly develops a life-threatening condition.

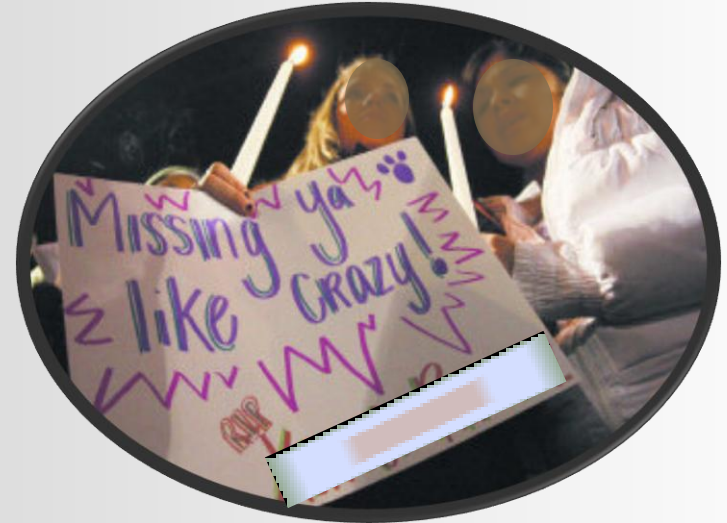


Imagine another healthy **uninsured** teen leaving the field of a sporting event because he doesn't feel well.

A tale of 2 sons



After successful surgery to remove a tennis-ball abscess from his neck, one mother's son is healthy and happy, and enjoying life as a teenager.



The other mother's son died on the school track while waiting for the family wash to finish at a nearby laundromat. He had been dropped from Medicaid, and couldn't get the testing he needed for a heart condition.

Health Care Reform 2010

After a century of debate, this year we said **NO MORE** to the reality that some mothers can get their children and loved ones the health care they need. . . and some cannot.



**NO
MORE!**

Health Care Reform 2010

Success!

In 2009, we passed comprehensive reform in the 5 committees of jurisdiction:

- 2 in the Senate
- 3 in the House of Representatives

... all with numerous amendments from both parties!



Health Care Reform 2010

Success!

- ❑ 2 Senate committee bills were combined into 1 Senate bill (H.R. 3590)
(passed with 60 votes – Dec. 24, 2009)
- ❑ 3 House committee bills were combined into 1 House bill (H.R. 3962)
(passed with 220 votes – Nov. 7, 2009)

Both bills passed with hundreds of amendments – from both parties!

Health Care Reform 2010

Success!

- ❑ **On March 21st**, the House approved the Senate bill, getting over the last major hurdle.
- ❑ **On March 23rd**, the President signed the bill.



A Moral Vision

“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”



- ❑ An interfaith statement of values informed our thinking about health care reform throughout the process.
- ❑ It was signed by nearly 100 faith organizations & thousands of individuals.

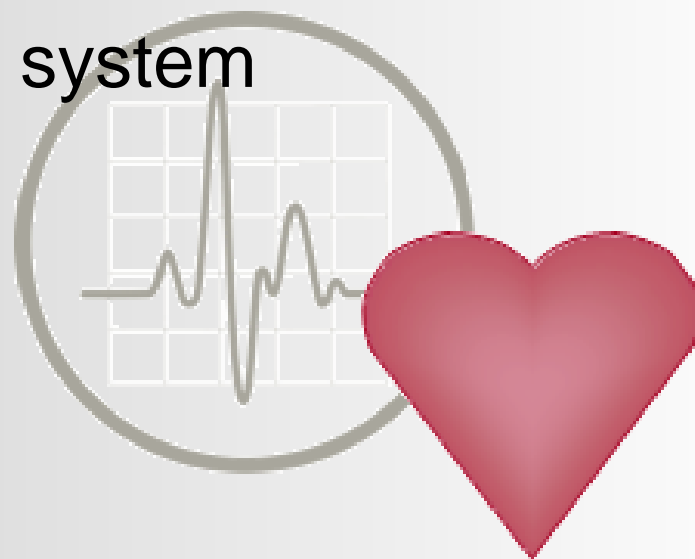
A Moral Vision

“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”

As people of faith, we envision a society where each person is afforded health, wholeness, and human dignity.

That vision embraces a system of health care that is...

- Inclusive
- Affordable
- Accessible
- Accountable



A Moral Vision

How much progress did we make in moving toward a health care future that includes everyone and works well for all of us?

How far did we move toward our Vision?

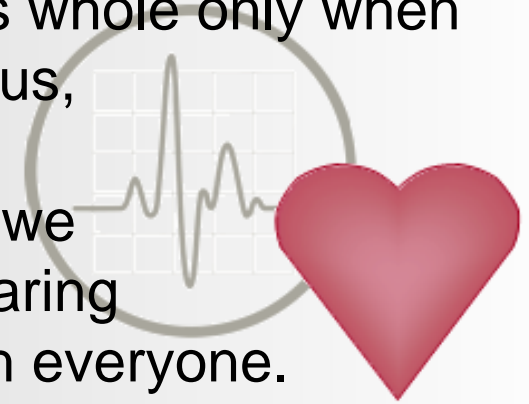
Whose lives will improve because of this legislation & our work together?



Vision: Inclusive Health Care

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

In the bonds of our human family, we are **created to be equal**. We are guided by a divine will to treat each person with **dignity** and to live together as an **inclusive community**. Affirming our commitment to the **common good**, we acknowledge our enduring responsibility to **care for one another**. As we recognize that society is whole only when we care for the most vulnerable among us, we are led to discern the human right to **health care and wholeness**. Therefore, we are called to act with **compassion** by sharing our **abundant health care resources** with everyone.



Vision: Inclusive Health Care

1

After 100 years of debate, the federal government made a legislative commitment to include almost everyone in our health care system.

2

Beginning THIS YEAR, dependent young adults will be able to remain on their parents' coverage until age 26.

Vision: Inclusive Health Care

3 Beginning this year, children cannot be excluded from parents' policies because of pre-existing conditions.

4 By 2014, no one can be excluded from coverage because of pre-existing conditions.

Vision: Inclusive Health Care

5

By 2014, Medicaid will be expanded to 133% of the federal poverty level to include those with the lowest incomes.

6

In 2014, the exchanges will make affordable health care more inclusive for those who are experiencing life's transitions: change/loss of job, divorce, moves, etc.

Vision: Affordable Health Care

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

We believe that in the sacred act of creation we are **endowed with the talents, wisdom and abundant resources** necessary to meet the needs of one another, including the health care needs of all. Therefore, in our calling to be **faithful stewards**, we understand our **responsibility** to use our health care resources **effectively**, to administer them **efficiently**, and to distribute them with **equity**.



Vision: Affordable Health Care

1

This year, many small businesses (including non-profits) will receive tax credits to help them purchase insurance for their employees.

2

This year, persons who have been uninsured for 6 months because of pre-existing conditions may purchase insurance in a new national high-risk pool.

Vision: Affordable Health Care

3

This year, senior adults who reach the gap (doughnut hole) in their Medicare prescription drug coverage will be entitled to a \$250 rebate.

4

Next year, generous discounts will be available for drugs purchased in the doughnut hole, leading to the gap being eliminated in ten years.

Vision: Affordable Health Care

5

In 2014, exchanges (marketplaces) will be established where individuals and small businesses may purchase affordable insurance.

6

In 2014, federal premium & cost-sharing subsidies will be provided to help persons up to 400% of the federal poverty level purchase insurance if they cannot get coverage in other ways.

Vision: Accessible Health Care

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

We believe **humanity is sacred** and that all persons should benefit from those actions which contribute to our health and wholeness. Therefore, we are called to act with **justice and love**, to ensure that all of us have access to the health care we need in order to live out the **fullness of our potential** both as individuals and as contributing members of our society. We must work together to identify and **overcome all barriers** to and disparities in such care.



Vision: Accessible Health Care

1

Standard benefits will be defined for all health plans in the exchanges, as well as new plans, including services often excluded from coverage:

- mental & behavioral health
- rehabilitation
- prevention & wellness
- maternity & new born
- chronic disease management
- prescription drugs
- and more!

Vision: Accessible Health Care

2 Incentives in medical education are designed to increase the number of primary care physicians and nurses.

3 A new national insurance program is established to provide financial assistance for the elderly and persons with disabilities who wish to remain in their homes and communities.

Vision: Accessible Health Care

4

Increased funding for community health centers will nearly double the number of persons who receive health care in under-served areas.

5

Attention will be given to increasing the racial & ethnic diversity of medical professionals, as well as cultural competency, to reduce disparities in access to and delivery of health care.

Vision: Accountable Health Care

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

We believe that as spiritual and sacred vessels, we are responsible for the **care of our bodies** to the best of our ability and for the **care of one another** regardless of individual circumstances. Therefore, individuals, families, governments, businesses, and the faith community are called to **work in partnership** for a system that ensures fully-informed, timely, **quality and safe care** that treats **body, mind and spirit**.



Vision: Accountable Health Care

- 1 New standards are set for the % of premiums that insurers must spend on medical care (medical loss ratio), rather than on excess profit, paperwork, and advertising.
- 2 Employers will share responsibility in providing insurance for their workers.

Vision: Accountable Health Care

3

Most individuals will share responsibility for health care by contributing a fair share for affordable coverage – and placing an emphasis on wellness, prevention, and self-care.

4

Attention will be given to payments based on improved outcomes, rather than on quantity of services.

Vision: Accountable Health Care

5

Members of Congress and their staff members will purchase their insurance in the same exchanges as millions of Americans and small businesses.

6

New practices will address quality, waste, fraud, abuse, and errors within the delivery of health care.

Challenges to justice

What didn't we get?

- Where does the new law fall short of our Vision?
- What challenges to justice remain?
- What still needs to be done?

Challenges to justice

To answer those questions, we are reminded of the need to measure our progress against the age-old “moral test” of a society:

How did we treat:

- Those who are in the dawn of life
 - the children?
- Those who are in the twilight of life
 - the elderly?
- Those who are in the shadow of life
 - the sick, needy, or differently-abled?

Challenges to justice

Justice questions to guide our thinking:

- Who is included? Who is still excluded?
- Who pays? Who profits? Who profits at the expense of those who cannot pay?
- Whose voices are/were heard? Whose are/were not?
- Who is accountable? And to whom?

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Inclusive Health Care

1

Some children will remain uninsured because of the way their states administer the Children's Health Insurance Program.

2

Some persons will qualify for Medicaid but barriers to enrollment may make discourage their participation.

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Inclusive Health Care

3

Legal immigrants who work, pay taxes & contribute to society are barred from Medicaid for 5 years; undocumented persons cannot even purchase insurance in the exchange with their own funds & no subsidies.

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Affordable Health Care

1

In the absence of a public option, or comparable alternative, there is no guarantee of affordable premiums.

2

Pharmaceutical industry support was contingent upon protecting their patents & prohibiting competition with the purchase of imported drugs.

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Accessible Health Care

1

Excessive documentation, meant to exclude undocumented immigrants, will create barriers for some citizens, as well: rural populations, persons born at home, those who never received a birth certificate; those displaced by natural disasters; and mixed-status families.

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Accessible Health Care

2

Raising Medicaid eligibility does not automatically guarantee access to medical professionals; low levels of reimbursement to Medicaid & Medicare) providers can result in some refusing to accept Medicaid or Medicare patients.

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Accountable Health Care

1

We still have no assurances that we'll be able to control costs among the for-profit stakeholders.

2

Industry & provider lobbies still have undue access to and power over legislators and regulators.

Challenges to justice

What else is missing?

- 1** A shared commitment around the understanding that providing needed health care is first and foremost a people issue – and a moral imperative.
- 2** The ability to transcend partisanship and to dialogue around shared values on behalf of the common good.

A Moral Vision for Our Future

“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”

Yes, our current discussion on health care is about how we design a health care future that includes everyone and works well for all of us – and the faith community’s role in making that happen.

But just as important...

A Moral Vision for Our Future

“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”

But just as important is the role of shaping our **public conscience** – thus transforming the way we respond to the common good.

It is about the **soul of our nation** & our ability to **demonstrate our concern** for our brothers & sisters in our national community.

A Moral Vision for Health Care

What to do... what to do...

Short-term:

- ❑ Continued outreach to Congress... calls, letters, vigils, etc.
- ❑ Be a part of the “truth squad” through education.
- ❑ Commit to staying engaged for the long-term.

A Moral Vision for Health Care

What to do... what to do...

Long-term:

- ❑ Participate in education, dialogue, & advocacy around implementation, improvements, & state reforms
- ❑ Help resist repeal & other opposition efforts

For more information

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