

Update on Health Care Reform

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APA Health Care Reform (HCR) Priorities

- ❖ Integrate mental and behavioral health care into primary care and other health care services...with psychologists...;
- ❖ Ensure access to quality mental and behavioral health promotion, screening and referral, prevention, early intervention, and wellness services for persons across the lifespan...;
- ❖ Develop and maintain a diverse psychology workforce competent to develop and apply evidence-based behavioral and psychosocial assessments and interventions to address the current needs and changing demographics of our nation's population;
- ❖ Ensure that quality mental and behavioral health care and access to psychologist providers are included in benefit plans;

APA Health Care Reform (HCR) Priorities (continued)

- ❖ Eliminate disparities in mental health status and mental health care;
- ❖ Increase federal funding for basic and translational psychological and behavioral research and training to develop and evaluate empirically-based treatments to improve health care;
- ❖ Include strong privacy and security records protections in the development of health information technology, with special attention to mental health records;
- ❖ Enhance the involvement of psychologists and other health care professionals with consumers, families, and caregivers in planning, implementing, and evaluating health care initiatives.

APA Health Care Reform (HCR) Priorities (continued)

An additional priority for the APA Practice Organization (APAPO) is ensuring adequate Medicare reimbursement rates.



APA Strategy on Health Care Reform

We have taken a multi-faceted approach with outreach to Congress, the White House, other Executive Branch agencies, media, our members, and other organizations



Locus of Legislative Action on Health Care Reform (key committees)

- ❖ Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee
- ❖ Senate Finance Committee
- ❖ House Ways and Means Committee
- ❖ House Energy and Commerce Committee
- ❖ House Education and Labor Committee



Status of Legislative Action in the House and Senate

- ❖ The three House Committees have rallied around the “Tri-Committee” bill, *America’s Affordable Health Choices Act*, H.R. 3200, and each has approved a version of the bill.
- ❖ The Senate HELP Committee reported out a bill in early July.
- ❖ The Senate Finance Committee is expected to introduce a bill by mid-September.



A Sample of Successes thus far on Health Care Reform

Integrated Health Care

- ❖ We secured a provision in the Senate HELP Committee bill to promote integrated, interprofessional care in primary care settings, which includes behavioral and mental health providers.
- ❖ We secured a provision in the Senate HELP Committee's bill authorizing primary care capacity building grants that prioritize integrated care models and training to work with diverse populations.



A Sample of Successes thus far on Health Care Reform

Integrated Health Care (cont)

We supported a provision in the House Tri-Committee bill to establish a training program to promote interdisciplinary and team-based models, including the integration of physical, mental, or behavioral health.



A Sample of Successes thus far on Health Care Reform

Health promotion and disease prevention

- ❖ All Senate and House bills will require the new health care system to focus on prevention initiatives, and the federal government will take a leading role in promoting prevention as central to care.
- ❖ We secured a provision in the Tri-Committee bill for the development of a national prevention strategy, prevention efforts in clinical and community settings (including schools), and use of behavioral and psychological measures in assessing outcomes.



A Sample of Successes thus far on Health Care Reform

Diverse psychology workforce

- ❖ We secured provisions in the Senate HELP Committee bill to expand funding to train psychologists, including in geriatric care, and the House Tri Committee bill also includes a training provision for which psychologists are eligible.
- ❖ We secured a definition of psychologists as “health professionals” in Senate HELP Committee’s bill



A Sample of Successes thus far on Health Care Reform

Quality mental health care and access to psychologists

- ❖ All Senate and House bills thus far require mental health and substance use benefits to be included in coverage.
- ❖ The Wellstone-Domenici mental health parity law will apply to health plans, and the House committee bills specifically impose parity requirements on the individual and small health plans that are currently exempt from the Wellstone-Domenici parity law.



A Sample of Successes thus far on Health Care Reform

Health disparities

- ❖ Major successes across important sections of both the Senate and House legislation include:
 - ❖ Emphasis on increasing health workforce diversity;
 - ❖ Focus on gender and sexual orientation in behavioral health and training, and better data on LGBT issues;
 - ❖ Emphasis on cultural and linguistic competence;
 - ❖ Increased research on effective methods to reduce disparities.
- ❖ We led a coordinated advocacy strategy, which included over 400 organizations and coalitions to advance health disparities issues within health reform.



A Sample of Successes thus far on Health Care Reform

Psychological and behavioral research

- ❖ We helped secure psychological research topics in the 100 research priority areas for Comparative Effectiveness Research recommended by the Institute of Medicine to receive part of the \$1.1 billion stimulus money allocation;
- ❖ As a consequence, the Federal Coordinating Council (which coordinates the \$400M for DHHS) has designated “behavior change” research as one of its six priority areas.



A Sample of Successes thus far on Health Care Reform

Medicare

- ❖ The House reform bills extend for two years the 5% boost in outpatient psychotherapy reimbursement that we won as part of the Medicare law passed in 2008. This extension is “scored” at \$60 million;
- ❖ The House reform bills propose to do away with the reimbursement formula that would trigger a 21% pay cut, and replace it with a 1% payment increase for next year.



A Sample of Successes thus far on Health Care Reform

Privacy of medical records (especially mental health information)

- ❖ We secured strong privacy and security protections included in economic recovery legislation in February 2009.



Our Members Have Come Through

**Throughout this process,
grassroots advocacy among our
members has been critical to our
successes. Thank you!**



Health Care Reform: Challenges Ahead

- ❖ Not all versions of legislation contain provisions that APA has advocated for (i.e., what we like isn't there);
- ❖ Versions of legislation that contain provisions that APA has advocated for could change (i.e., what we like could be taken out);
- ❖ Future versions of legislation could include provisions that are unfavorable to psychology (i.e., what we don't like could be included).