



Consensus Principles For Health Care Reform

OBJECTIVES Advocate for principles that a broad set of interests in the private sector, including employers and business associations, health plans, and hospitals, endorse and want the Connecticut Legislature to approve.

PRINCIPLES

1. The state must immediately increase reimbursements to providers under the HUSKY, Medicaid Fee for Service, and SAGA programs in order to help stabilize hospital finances, improve access by participants to physicians, and reduce cost shifting to employers providing coverage; setting rates sufficient to cover the cost of care at hospitals and to attract an adequate network of physicians to serve HUSKY, Medicaid Fee for Service, and SAGA beneficiaries. The state should maintain its commitment to help offset the cost of the uninsured who seek care at hospitals.
2. The state should expand Medicaid by replacing SAGA with full coverage of childless adults up to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level.
3. The State should vigorously increase enrollment of children in HUSKY A and B.
4. Our current employer-sponsored insurance system should be strengthened, not abandoned. The state should create new refundable tax credits and/or premium subsidies to encourage small businesses to provide health insurance, and to support the costs to individuals of participating in employer-based plans or purchasing individual coverage.
5. The state should apply for the necessary waivers to permit HUSKY individuals to enroll into employer-based coverage using state and federal dollars.
6. The state, working with the private sector, should create and fund a Commission on Healthy Lifestyles to engage in a variety of public health and educational programs to encourage individuals and employers to engage in healthy behaviors and wellness programs, with an initial focus on smoking and obesity. The Commission should be a non-profit entity with membership from both the public and private sectors.
7. The state, working with health plans, employers, and providers, should create and fund the Connecticut Health Data and Technology Institute. The mission of the Institute would be to (a) collect and analyze data necessary for the presentation to consumers, payers, and providers in simple formats of comparative cost, benefit, and quality information regarding health plans, providers, and competing medical and pharmaceutical therapies, (b) develop and disseminate evidence-based standards of care and practice guidelines to assist providers to comply with best clinical practices and to serve as a basis for measurement of quality of care, and (c) promulgate standards, develop funding sources, and support the deployment of advanced e-prescribing and electronic medical record technology by the state's health care providers. Any initiative to increase the use of information and information technology should avoid redundancy and must use nationally recognized interoperability and privacy standards.
8. Much of the funding for these initiatives can and should be found within existing state and federal resources. For example, savings derived from the use of best practices across all state services should be used to defray the cost of implementing these initiatives. Any additional funding requirements should come from broad-based, rather than narrow, revenue sources. Taxing healthcare to pay for healthcare is not an acceptable solution.