



Preparing California's Healthcare Workforce



**HWDAC Information Hearing
May 6, 2008
10:00 am to 11:30 am
Sacramento, CA**

In 2007, the Administration convened the Healthcare Workforce Diversity Advisory Council (Council) housed within the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development and chaired by LCHC. Comprised of health policy advocates, health professions pipeline programs, workforce investment, health student and professional associations, research, labor, and industry, the Council was charged with developing policy recommendations to address California's health professional shortages, especially among underrepresented groups.

Public input from hundreds of key stakeholders gathered through regional hearings guided the Council in identifying and prioritizing recommendations. The result of your input and Council meetings is a report release to the Administration and Legislature on Tuesday, May 6, 2008. The informational hearing is tentatively scheduled for 10-11:30 with a lunch reception following. Please join us and other advocates in developing CA's health workforce. For more information, please contact lnguy@lchc.org

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

For many of us in healthcare advocacy, the transition from 2007 to 2008 remains as much of a blur, given the widely-discussed health care reform reviewed at the end of last year through a Special Session called by Governor Schwarzenegger. As LCHC has brought to you previously, the lack of votes in the Senate brought the early 2008 dialogue on healthcare reform to a screeching halt. In fact, it ended the legislative vehicle (AB x 1 1) and essentially closed out the chances of reforming the state's health care system.

The bill's fairly late ending that coincided with one of the first legislative deadlines of the year put many who work on health issues in a weird state. It meant starting the new legislative year in a position many had expected, or hoped, not to be in – having to figure out what to do in a legislative years sans health care reform. As a result, many legislative issues have gotten off to an unusually late start. Fortunately, the structured legislative process is as faithful as it is rigid and many of us have begun to fall back into our rhythm again. Unfortunately, that doesn't mean that one has any chance to relax as we approach a budget year that will no doubt leave many Californians hurting. As we struggle to tackle the state's budget deficit, it is clear that not only will we not have an improved healthcare system, but holding the line of basic health services through the state's budget will be an uphill battle given our the size of our deficit. Below are those legislative issues impacting Latino health.

California's Latinos & Prescription Medications

In 2007, LCHC co-sponsored SB 472 (Corbett) which requires the California State Board of Pharmacy to develop and implement a standard, patient-centered prescription drug label, ready for distribution by January 1, 2011. Once again, California is ahead of the curve in patient safety, and other states are looking to us to set the bar for providing high-quality language services to patients in pharmacy settings. The Board is holding meetings throughout California to hear from the public about their problems with prescription labeling, and LCHC is working with limited English proficient communities to hear their perspectives and pass them on to the Board.

The first meeting was held on April 12 in Fremont and attended by pharmacists, their representatives, and LCHC and our co-sponsors at Gray Panthers and Senior Action Network. The Board needs increased public input to develop a meaningful product, and we will be working with the Board throughout the year to ensure this.

If you are interested in participating in a hearing to share your experience, or that of your family or community, or would be interested in convening people to tell the Board about their problems with prescription drug labels, contact Vanessa Cajina at (916) 448-3234 or at vcajina@lchc.org for more information.



Access to Healthcare

Access to quality, affordable health care and health care coverage is still one of the most significant challenges facing Latinos today. Latinos continue to make up the majority of the estimated 6.5 million Californians that are uninsured. Unfortunately, increasing health care costs and decreasing rates of employer-based health care coverage will do little to improve those already uninsured.

While negotiations and discussions continue to occur around the issue of reforming California's health care system, these and many other legislative issues impacting or improving health care coverage continue through California's legislative process. Below are the bills impacting Latinos:

Expanding Access

Bill No. & Author	Description	LCHC's Position	Status
SB 840 (Kuehl)	CA Universal Healthcare System (Single-Payer Health Care) Would make all California residents eligible for benefits.	SUPPORT	Pending review by Senate Appropriations
SB 564 (Ridley-Thomas)	CA School Health Centers LCHC Sponsored Establishes a grant program to encourage and expand school health centers that provide primary care and other critical services.	SUPPORT	2-year bill; awaiting review by the Governor
SB 1213 (Ducheny)	Mobile Health Care Units Eliminates burdensome reporting requirements to state and local authorities in order to provide services at a new site.	SUPPORT	Sent to Senate floor for full vote by Senate
AB 2010 (DeSaulnier)	Provisional Licensure for Clinics Eliminates unnecessary licensure requirements for certain affiliate health clinics in order to provide increase access to services.	SUPPORT	Passed Assembly and has been referred to the Senate

Private Market Reform

SB 1522 (Steinberg)	Coverage Choice Categories for Plans & Insurance Policies Would begin to standardize coverage offered but requiring state entities to develop five coverage categories in order to help consumers track premium costs and benefits offered.	SUPPORT	Passed Senate Health committee and is pending review by Senate Appropriations
AB 1554 (Jones)	Premium Rate Review Would regulate insurance rates by requiring plans and insurance policies to submit a rate application for approval.	SUPPORT	2-year bill; Pending further review by Senate Health
AB 1962 (De La Torre)	Maternity Services in California's health insurance policies Ensures a baby's healthy start by requiring every individual or group policy of health insurance to provide coverage for maternity services.	SUPPORT	Passed Assembly Health; pending review by Assembly Approps.

Child Health Care Coverage

AB 1 (Laird)	Healthy Families Buy-In Program to cover California's Kids Expands Medi-Cal and Healthy Families Program (HFP) eligibility to cover all children with family incomes at or below 300% of the federal poverty level.	SUPPORT	2-year bill; Passed legislative process; awaiting review by Governor
SB 32 (Steinberg)	Healthy Families Buy-In Program to cover California's Kids Similar to last year's twin efforts related to SB 437 (Escutia) and AB 772 (Chan), SB 32 mirrors AB 1 (Laird).	SUPPORT	2-year bill; currently on Assembly floor awaiting vote by full Assembly

Community Health

The data is alarming – today, one out of every three Latino adolescents is overweight or at-risk of becoming overweight. Unfortunately, research also indicates that a significant percentage of overweight or obese adolescents will go on to become overweight or obese adults. Already, Latinos have a higher propensity to face one, if not more than one (co-morbidity), chronic illness over their lifetime such as diabetes or heart disease. In fact, the prevalence rate for Type 2 diabetes is 1 ½ times higher among Latinos. This is not surprising, given that 40% of all Latino adults today are overweight. Increased consumption of healthier foods combined with physical activity is critical to improving our community's overall health and well-being. Here is this year's related legislation:

Nutrition & Healthy Foods

Bill No. & Author	Description	LCHC's Position	Status
SB 1420 (Padilla)	Nutritional Information & Menu Boards Helps consumers make informed decisions about food consumption by requiring restaurants with 15 or more locations to provide information on calories, grams of fat and sodium on their menu boards.	SUPPORT	Passed review by Senate Health committee; pending vote by full Senate
AB 2572 (Parra)	Codification of Existing Nutrition Standards Simply codifies already-existing nutritional information notices in restaurants which may be insufficient for improving consumer choice.	OPPOSE	Passed Assembly Health committee; pending review by Assembly Approps.
AB 2708 (Solorio)	Junk Food Marketing Would improve our students' health by prohibiting targeted junk food marketing to our kids.	SUPPORT	Passed Assembly Education committee, pending review by Assembly Approps.

Physical Activity

AB 2989 (Fuentes)	Outdoor Environmental Education & Recreation Program Establishes a grant program that would increase the ability of underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor recreation and education.	SUPPORT	Passed review by the Assembly Water, Parks & Wildlife committee; pending further review by Assembly Approps.
AB 2072 (Hayashi)	California's Physical Education Award Program Would develop non-monetary awards and incentives program for schools that excel in student physical education achievement.	SUPPORT	Passed Assembly Education committee; pending further review by Assembly Approps.

Other Prevention & Community Health Issues

AB 1472 (Leno)	California Healthy Places Act of 2008 Would require state agency coordination to improve health and reduce disparities through health assessments of land use and transportation system planning.	SUPPORT	Pending review by Senate Appropriations committee
AB 2474 (Galgiani)	Office for Childhood Obesity Prevention (OCOP) Creates the OCOP which would coordinate state and local efforts to promote healthy eating and an active lifestyle.	SUPPORT	In Assembly Appropriations committee
AB 2902 (Swanson)	Public Health Outreach & Community Health Workers Encourages the use of community-based health care workers, such as promotores de salud to improve the health of underserved communities.	SUPPORT	In Assembly Appropriations committee

Health Disparities

Despite advances in medical technology, ongoing disparities in both outcomes and treatment continue to occur for Latinos, particularly for certain illnesses, despite overall improvements for other categories and populations. Data indicates that provider-to-patient concordance – agreement between doctor and patient – is key to patients actually following their medical treatment. Research also indicates that racial concordance – when the patient and doctor are of the same race or ethnicity – improves adherence to treatment. It is clear that treatment provided in a culturally appropriate method or conducted in a language the patient can understand, improves patient health. Unfortunately, today, less than 5% of all practicing physicians are Latino. Below are those related issues:

Health Workforce Development & Preparedness

Bill No. & Author	Description	LCHC's Position	Status
AB 2375 (Hernandez)	Master Plan for California's Healthcare Workforce Moves the state to begin planning for projected shortages in many of California's healthcare professions by developing a master plan for health professions through the development of a task force.	LCHC Sponsored SUPPORT	Passed both Assembly Health and Labor & Employment; pending further review by Assembly Approps.
AB 2439 (De La Torre)	Steven M. Thompson Loan Repayment Program Supports the repayment program designed to attract providers to medically underserved areas through the assessment of a \$50 fee.	SUPPORT	Passed review by Assembly Approps; awaiting vote of the full Assembly
AB 2543 (Berg)	Geriatric and Gerontology Workforce Expansion Act Among other provisions, would require that a specified percentage of fees raised through the Steven Thompson Loan Repayment Program go towards attracting providers to geriatric care settings.	SUPPORT	Pending review by Assembly Health committee; pending further committee assignment

Higher Education & Technical Training

SB 1301 (Cedillo)	California DREAM Act Would require higher education institutions in California to establish forms and procedures for expanding students' access to higher ed.	SUPPORT	Passed Senate Education; pending further review by Senate Appropriations
AB 2083 (Núñez)	California DREAM Act Similar to other efforts, AB 2083 mirrors SB 1301 and is considered its companion legislation.	SUPPORT	In Assembly Appropriations awaiting further review
AB 2365 (De La Torre)	Cal Grant B Expansion Supports extremely low-income families with college-bound students by expanding the number and award amounts of first-year Cal Grant B recipients.	SUPPORT	Passed Assembly Higher Education committee; awaiting further review by Assembly Approps.

Reducing Disparities in Language

AB 3027 (de León)	Notices for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Patients Requires state entities to develop a uniform notice advising LEP enrollees in commercial managed care plans or insurance policies of their right to an interpreter.	SUPPORT	Passed Assembly Health committee; pending further review by the Assembly Approps. committee.
AB 1930 (Torrico)	Emergency Preparedness & California's LEP Community Assists California's limited English proficient (LEP) community by ensuring that state departments take LEP needs into consideration when preparing for emergencies and natural disasters.	SUPPORT	Passed the Assembly Governmental Organization; pending further review by Assembly Approps.

Building a regional Latino Health agenda

Throughout the month of April, Latino community leaders from throughout the state gathered together in Hayward, Los Angeles, Fresno, and San Diego to talk about the state's budget deficit and figure out ways to work together to inform our lawmakers about the impacts this budget will have on our community. Members were particularly dismayed to hear about the reinstatement of Medi-Cal Quarterly Status Reports, the elimination of certain benefits from adult Medi-Cal recipients, reimbursement rate reductions to Medi-Cal providers, and increases in co-payments and premiums in Healthy Families.

In Hayward, participants met at the Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center (TVHC) and were addressed by Assemblymember Alberto Torrico, who encouraged members of the Bay Area Regional Network to engage with Republican members of the Legislature. "We need to talk to them about the services we provide for people in the state," he remarked. "An all-cuts budget is not the answer, and we need to you help us make that case." Participants also heard from Gloria Gonzalez, a promotora de salud at TVHC, who is part of TVHC's new "policy promotoras" program. Promotoras work with their communities to provide health services and education. As such, they are natural community leaders and well-suited to engage with elected officials to let them know how these proposed budget cuts will affect our community. "Una comunidad no puede ser sana sin tener un voto ni una voz," or "a community cannot be healthy if it is not active and engaged in civic life," Gloria told the group.

In San Diego, members met at the San Ysidro Health Center and heard from Senate Budget Chair Denise Moreno Ducheny, who outlined a history of the state's budget problems and discussed possible solutions and compromises. "We need you to communicate with some of our colleagues who could possibly vote for a budget with fee and revenue increases," she told members. "You need to work with us on this budget, because the Legislature can't do this on our own."

Throughout June and July, LCHC will be working with its regional members in Los Angeles, the Bay Area, San Diego and the Central Valley to talk with members of the legislature about the Governor's proposed budget and let them know how much these cuts will hurt health care delivery and the community as a whole.

We need your help and here's how:

- Join us to represent your organization in meeting with members of the legislature and their staff either in their district or in Sacramento
- Sign on to a budget letter detailing the impacts of the proposed cuts
- Call your legislators offices to tell them how these cuts will hurt your community

Our legislators are facing a November election and need to be responsive to the needs of their constituents. Now is the time to act. To get involved, contact Vanessa Cajina, Regional Networks Coordinator at (916) 448-3234 or vcajina@lchc.org.

Next Legislative Deadlines:

- ◆ **May 16** - Last day for policy committees to meet
- ◆ **May 23** - Last day for appropriations committees to meet and report bills to the floor on bill introduced in their house.

In the Next Policy Update:

Latinos & Mental Health in California

You are receiving this Policy Update via LCHC's Rapid Response Network. If you would like to become an LCHC member, please visit our website at www.LCHC.org.





JOIN THE LATINO COALITION FOR A HEALTHY CALIFORNIA

The Latino Coalition for a Healthy California, a non-profit, public policy and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the health of Latinos, invites you to become a member. As a member, you will become part of a larger movement of professionals, medical providers, legislative staff and others interested in advancing the health of Latinos.

LCHC Membership

Benefits of dues-paying members of the Latino Coalition include the following:

- Subscription to monthly LCHC newsletter
- Discounts on registration fees to all LCHC events, including the biennial conference
- Invitations to all LCHC events, including legislative and community briefings
- Monthly electronic updates on legislative and budget issues
- Inclusion in the Rapid Response Network, LCHC's email listserv regarding pressing legislative issues
- Advanced release of select LCHC policy briefs
- Technical assistance with questions regarding legislative and budget issues
- Opportunity to participate in local health forums, such as the LCHC Regional Networks
- Building a long-term relationship with companies and organizations that support Latino health
- Sharing information and collaborating in projects with other health professionals.

Affiliate Membership – Rapid Response Network

Affiliate members of LCHC do not pay dues and are included in the Rapid Response Network, LCHC's email list serve that provides up-to-date information regarding pressing health legislation and events. Affiliate members do not receive the other benefits of dues-paying members.

Check the following

I would like to become a dues-paying member of LCHC.

I would like to become an affiliate member and be added to the Rapid Response Network (free).

Membership Fees

- \$35 Student \$50 Individual \$150 Non-Profit \$1,500 Corporate

If you would like to become an LCHC member or an affiliate member, please email, fax or call with the following information:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Name on Credit Card: _____ Credit Card Number: _____

Credit Card Type: _____ Security Code (3-4 digits on back of card): _____ Expiration Date: _____

OR SIGN-UP ONLINE AT WWW.LCHC.ORG

Please make all checks payable to the Tides Center/LCHC. The Latino Coalition for a Healthy California does not share its lists.

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