

Key Messages on Affordability

For months, Members of Congress, advocates and the public have been talking about the need for health reform to deliver affordable, quality health care for all. However, there has been little discussion about what affordability really means. The Community Catalyst & PICO paper and the information from the call outline 7 key principles to consider when defining an affordability standard. Congress is now at the point where they are having serious discussions about system reform, coverage and financing, and we need to do our part to ensure the conversation includes these key principles.

A broad consumer voice advocating for a strong affordability standard is critical. Now is the time to encourage Members to dedicate the necessary resources needed to put health care into reach for the millions of uninsured and underinsured.

Some suggestions for engaging your Congressional delegations:

1. The attached Families USA handout can be a useful handout to highlight the affordability challenges families and individuals face.
2. The Community Catalyst & PICO paper can be used to help your Congressional delegation think through the key issues related to setting an affordability standard.
3. Share stories with your Members to help them understand how this issue is impacting real families in their home state.
4. These ***suggested message points*** can be used when you talk to your delegation:
 - If we fix other things but do not effectively address affordability then health reform won't accomplish what we truly want it to accomplish—helping people secure coverage.
 - We want health care reform to work—for the country and for our community, ourselves and our neighbors.
 - The number one reason that people lack health coverage is that they cannot afford it.
 - During these difficult times especially, families need options to help them protect themselves from the bankruptcy and financial ruin that comes from just one unexpected illness. We need affordable options for everyone.
 - We encourage you to emphasize the significance of affordability in discussions with leadership and your caucuses.