



State of the Nation's Health Care 2012

Get to Know Your Democratic Candidates *Important Questions to Help Evaluate their Health Care Positions*

Answers to the below questions will help voters discern how candidates propose to address the challenges of unsustainable cost increases and uneven quality and access, and help move the debate from the polarizing ideological fight over repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to discussion of solutions that could command bipartisan participation.

Three Key Questions for President Obama and Democratic congressional candidates:

1. **What changes, if any, would you consider making in the Affordable Care Act, to address concerns that it gives the federal government too big a role and that it doesn't do enough to reduce costs? Specifically:**
 - If the insurance requirement is found to be unconstitutional, what alternatives, if any, would you consider to encourage people to buy insurance when healthy and to discourage them from waiting until they are sick to buy coverage?
 - Would you give Congress more authority over an Independent Payment Advisory Board, such as allowing it to reject the board's recommendations by a simple majority vote?
 - Would you give states more options to design their own programs, beyond what is currently in the ACA?
 - Would you support giving consumers more options to purchase high deductible health savings accounts?
 - Would you support providing more options, in addition to those included in the ACA, for consumers to buy insurance across state lines, and if so, what consumer protections and benefit requirements should be required?
 - What additional policies would you advocate to address the projected shortage of 40,000 primary care physicians?
2. **What specific policies would you advocate to reform Medicare and Medicaid in order to sustain their financing and reduce their impact on increasing the deficit and debt? Specifically, would you support:**
 - A pilot test of offering Medicare beneficiaries the choice of a premium support program or traditional Medicare?
 - Increasing the age of Medicare eligibility if alternative sources of coverage are available?
 - Requiring higher income Medicare beneficiaries to pay more?
 - Creating a single deductible for Medicare Parts A and B?
 - Giving states more flexibility and an improved waiver process for Medicaid?
 - Increasing Medicare payroll taxes?
3. **What specific policies would you support to reduce the costs of defensive medicine? Specifically, would you support:**
 - Caps on non-economic damages?
 - A national pilot of no-fault health courts?