The Uncertain Future of Medicaid and Children’s Oral Health: Updates on the Health Care Debate and Strategies for Local Advocacy

Webinar by Children’s Dental Health Project with special guests, Libby Mullin from Mullin Strategies and Helen Hendrickson and Kyle Marie Stock from Community Catalyst

April 5, 2017
Part 1

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT (AHCA)
PRESENTER: LIBBY MULLIN
AHCA – Affordable Care Act Content

• Removed individual mandate & changed incentive structure for healthier individuals
• Decreased tax credits making insurance less affordable
• Weakened pricing protections of marketplace insurance plans
• Eliminated cost-sharing reductions for low-income individuals and families
• Muddied the waters on essential health benefits
AHCA – Medicaid changes

• Would have shifted Medicaid financing to per capita caps or block grants
  – Both options pushed costs and risks to states
  – Block grant option would give states maximum flexibility to change Medicaid programs including dropping EPSDT care standards
  – Would jeopardize access to oral health care, especially for adults

• Would have phased out Medicaid expansion

• Would have weakened enrollment and eligibility
What happened?

- Mar 6 – AHCA introduced to the House
- Mar 8 – passed by E & C and W & M committees
- Mar 16 – passed Budget committee
- Mar 20 – Amended version released including controversial “block grant” option added
- Mar 23
  - vote originally scheduled
  - another round of amendments including removing EHBs
- Mar 24 – vote canceled, bill pulled
Political Dynamics

- House Republicans
  - Speaker of the House Paul Ryan
  - Freedom Caucus played unprecedented roll
  - Moderate Republicans kept low profile
- House Democrats leveraged grassroots & stayed on message
- Senate Republicans less engaged in House dynamics
- President Trump vs. Freedom Caucus
- Grassroots impact VERY significant
THE POWER OF ADVOCACY TO PROTECT HEALTH CARE

Helen M. Hendrickson
Community Catalyst
April 5, 2017
Community Catalyst is a national non-profit advocacy organization that works with national, state and local consumer organizations, policymakers and foundations to build consumer and community leadership to improve the health care system.

We support consumer advocacy networks that impact state and federal health care policy, and ensure consumers have a seat at the table as health care decisions are made.
Grassroots Advocacy Saved the Day!

Protect our Care Campaign!

- Partnership of national healthcare organization
- Supporting advocacy by State-Based Groups
Oral Health advocacy group took leadership role

Action alerts to members
Policy briefings
Rallies
Our Impact:

- Built a campaign of **7,000+** Pennsylvanians
- Made **25,000+** calls, resulting in **4,686** conversations with lawmakers
- Earned **135** media pieces
- Hosted **7** statewide educational events
- And **65+** organizational partners
- Held **35** events across the state
- Collected **555** personal stories
- Facilitated **weekly** field & partner calls
Maine’s People Alliance

Organized two Massive Advocacy Summits.

• 300 attended in Ellsworth, ME (3/4)
• 800 attended in Augusta ME (3/5)
Get Ready for the Next Fight

• Evil is Still Out There: expect continued threats to ACA, Medicaid and more

• Next Steps
  – April Recess
  – Re-tool for the next fight
  – Establish and Strengthen relationships with partners (especially Protect Our Care leads in your state)
• We elect them, they work for us
• This fight will include policy at both the state and federal level
• You don’t need to know everything in order to take action
• The best time to take action…. depends
Many Ways to Take Action

Spectrum of Ways to Take Action

Capacity

- Press event
- Hospital/Health Center tour
- Produce a story video
- Sign on to letter petition
- Op-Ed
- Story placement
- Twitter chat
- Letter writing party/event
- Thunderclap
- Letter to the Editor

Edginess of Tactic

- Host a rally
- Attend a rally
- Civil disobedience
- Organization-hosted town hall
- M.O.C.-hosted Town Hall
- Sit-in
- Birddogging

Representation of varying degrees of edginess or required capacity
Make Connections

Connect with health groups who are organizing events

• Plug in to add value
• Elevate oral health issues

Cultivate your network to take action

Support other related issues
• WIC and immigration
Put pressure on members of congress to protect Medicaid, defined the ACA and expend CHIP

- Attend members of congress events
- Plan town Halls and Public Events (or plug in)
- Earned Media (LTE, Story placement, Editorial Board outreach)
- Social media
Provider advocates can be some of the best messengers.

- Letters to the Editor (LTE) and Op-eds
- Collect Patient Stories
- Schedule advocacy visits and bring a patient with a story
What can we do to raise this up when we know that health equity arguments do not resonate with our leaders?

- Deliberate inclusion of communities with high rates of oral disease
- Support these community partners to attend town hall meetings and other public events
- Support community partners to develop questions/comments that elevates issues in their community
You can’t just leave those who created the problem in charge of the solution.

- Tyree Scott
Thank You

Helen M. Hendrickson
Community Catalyst
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Part 3

WHAT CAN I DO?
Who: Your Elected Officials

- Senators & members of Congress
- Governors
- State legislators
- State & federal agency officials (particularly Medicaid)
What: Topics of interest for oral health

• **Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)**
  - CHIP funding for states runs out **September 2017**
  - **Your message**: Pass “clean” CHIP renewal as soon as possible to preserve affordable, comprehensive oral health coverage for more than 8 million children

• **Renewed attempts to repeal and replace the ACA**
  - “AHCA 2.0”, budget & appropriations bills, debt ceiling, etc.
  - **Your message**: We’ve made great strides over the last few years, we don’t want to move backwards!

• **Essential Health Benefits (i.e. oral health coverage for children)**
  - **Your message**: Oral health is critical to overall health and has lasting economic impact.

• **Medicaid**
  - **Your message**: No American should be left worse off with regard to coverage, access, and affordability.

• Tune in next month when we review waivers and what they mean for funding and access to oral health treatment
When: Now and Congressional Recess

• Next slotted district/state work period is scheduled for **April 10 – 21**
  – District work periods -recesses from DC when representatives are scheduled to be “home”
  – How can you and/or your network capitalize on this time?
    • Invite representative to events
    • Schedule a visit
    • Drop-off something (i.e. stack of signed postcards)
  – Share it on social media!
Part 4

QUESTIONS AND HOUSE KEEPING
Q&A
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https://www.facebook.com/childrensdentalhealth

Follow up with any questions:

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