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[Health Care Reform and the HIV Epidemic Top Ten Issues] [loose]

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Health Care Reform and the HIV Epidemic Top Ten Issues

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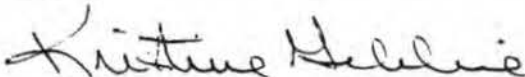
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Based on a series of focus groups with people with AIDS and HIV/AIDS service organizations, a list of "top ten" concerns for the HIV community were identified. Information regarding these concerns is attached for your review.

I hope this information will be helpful to you. If I can be of further assistance or provide any additional information, please contact me or Andrew E. Barrer, Ph.D. at (202) 632-1090. Thank you.



Kristine M. Gebbie, R.N., M.N.
National AIDS Policy Coordinator

Top Ten Issues

- 1. Premium Financing and Risk Adjustment**
- 2. Availability of and Assured Access to "Essential Providers"**
- 3. Long-term and Home Care Coverage**
- 4. Availability of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services**
- 5. Impact of the HSA on the Ryan White CARE Act**
- 6. Medicaid and Medicare Funding and Program Transition Issues, especially as related to the Medicare and Medicaid programs**
- 7. Confidentiality**
- 8. Grievance Procedures**
- 9. Effects of "State Options" on the HSA package of benefits**
- 10. Funding for Public Health System Core Functions (e.g. Behavioral Research, Prevention Services, etc.)**

1. Premium Financing and Risk Adjustment

Issue: Will the risk adjustment mechanism prevent "redlining" for persons with HIV/AIDS or other life threatening illnesses?

Summary: Yes. Redlining, or any attempts to limit access to people with HIV or AIDS is clearly prohibited. The HSA provides mechanisms which require states to spread the financial risks associated with special communities by adjustments which would take into account such factors known to affect utilization of services, such as age, sex, health status and services to disadvantaged populations. The health plans have to meet specific rules on enrollment, community rating, information, and grievance procedures.

2. Availability of HIV Specialist, "Essential Providers"

Issue: Will HIV positive persons be able to continue using their local HIV medical specialist?

Summary: The Health Security Act establishes a special category of health care provider which is referred to as an "essential provider". Any health care provider or organization can make application to be certified as an essential provider. Within the HSA, a Ryan White grantee or subgrantee can be automatically certified as an essential provider. Each health plan must enter into a written agreement with each essential provider located within its service area.

3. Long-term Care and Home Health Care

Issue: Persons with HIV/AIDS often need home health care and long-term care services. Will the Health Security Act provide those needed services?

Summary: Home health care is included in the nationally guaranteed comprehensive benefits package. A new long-term care initiative will expand coverage of home and community-based care. This will make it possible for more elderly and disabled persons, including persons living with HIV/AIDS to live in their homes and communities while receiving long-term care. The Act will improve

Medicaid coverage for persons in nursing homes.

The HSA will improve the quality and reliability of private long-term care insurance and provide tax incentives for persons to buy it; and tax incentives to help individuals with disabilities work.

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Issue: Mental health needs in the HIV/AIDS community tend to be greater than the average. What will HSA do to provide these services? Injecting drug users, at high risk of HIV infection and transmission, currently have inadequate treatment and preventive services available to them. Will adequate services be available to treat these individuals in order to ameliorate their additive disease and halt the epidemic?

Summary: A base level of mental health services will be provided to all persons through the Health Security Act. We know that viable mental health services are part of a good program of health care and especially beneficial to HIV infected persons.

In order to make a significant difference in the rate of new infections in the injecting drug use population and their sexual partners, the HSA will provide substance abuse treatment to everyone.

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Issue: Will the financial restructuring of the health care system assure the delivery of health care services appropriate to the needs of vulnerable populations whose access problems go beyond lack of insurance?

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The CARE Act is not a "band-aid" that can be discarded after health care reform. The Act will serve as a critical resource to sustain health care delivery systems and insure the continued delivery of essential and comprehensive health and support services to those infected with HIV.

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Issue: What is the nature of the funding for research on behavior, health services and Core Functions of Public Health Programs?

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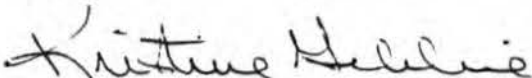
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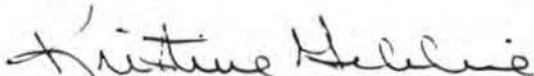
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