

A Patient's Perspective

Universal Health Care

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Health Care For All



HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

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Health Care For All (HCFA)
advocates for health justice
in Massachusetts by working
to promote health equity and
ensure coverage and access for all.

Health Care For All HelpLine

- Helps residents at all income levels
- Enrolls people in public and private programs, and problem-solves a range of consumer issues
- 20,000 calls annually
- Only statewide multilingual phone service (English, Spanish & Portuguese)



Health Care For All



Calls on the HelpLine inform
HCFA's policy and advocacy work

Health Care For All



HCFA leads or co-leads 8 coalitions on a range of issues:

- ACA Defense
- Oral Health
- Children's Health
- Patient Confidentiality
- Immigrant Health
- Social Determinants of Health



Health Care For All

4 phases of health reform

1988 – Phase 1:

Universal Health Reform Law

1996 – Phase 2:

Medicaid expansion for low income adults and kids & drug benefit for seniors

2006 – Phase 3:

Chapter 58, precursor to the ACA

2012 – Phase 4:

Chapter 224

Payment Reform/Transparency

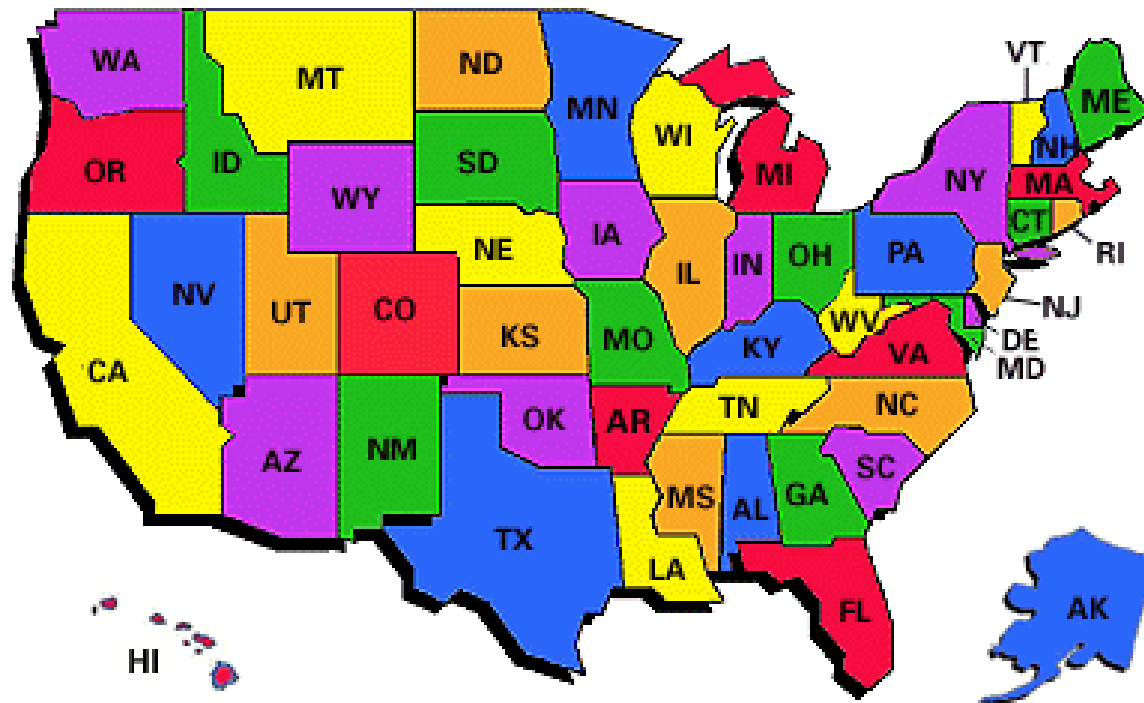


How do we get to universal coverage?



States:

Laboratories for the Federal Government



Massachusetts is the Perfect Example



Near Universal Coverage in MA

96.3%

of MA residents have
health insurance coverage

97.9%

of MA children are covered



According to *Findings From the 2017 Massachusetts Health Insurance Survey*, Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA), December 2017

How did Massachusetts Achieve This?



Question:

What are the advocacy & policy strategies that made this work possible?

Continuum of Advocacy & Policy Strategies



Political
Center

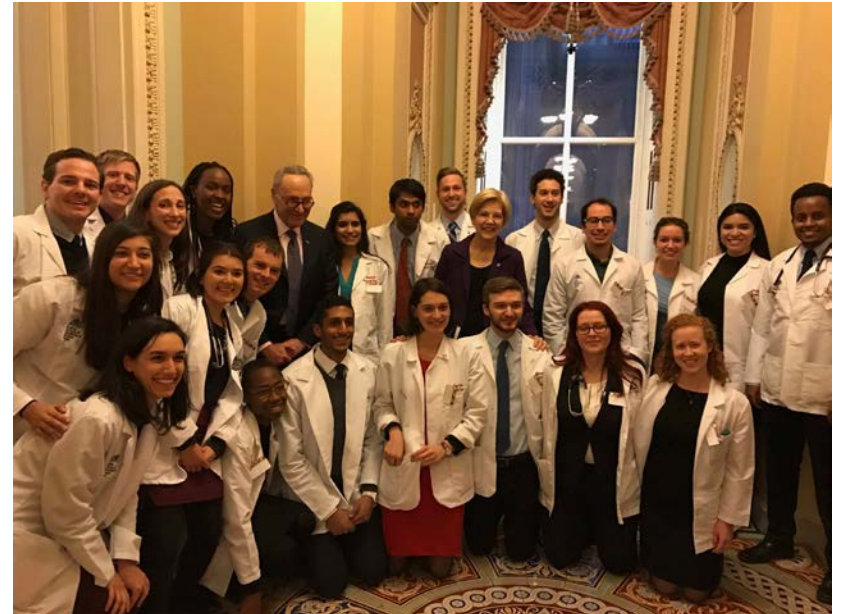


Pushing the
Envelope

Pragmatic



Advocacy Strategies




Policy Strategies



Policy Strategies



Promote *Health Justice* in Massachusetts:

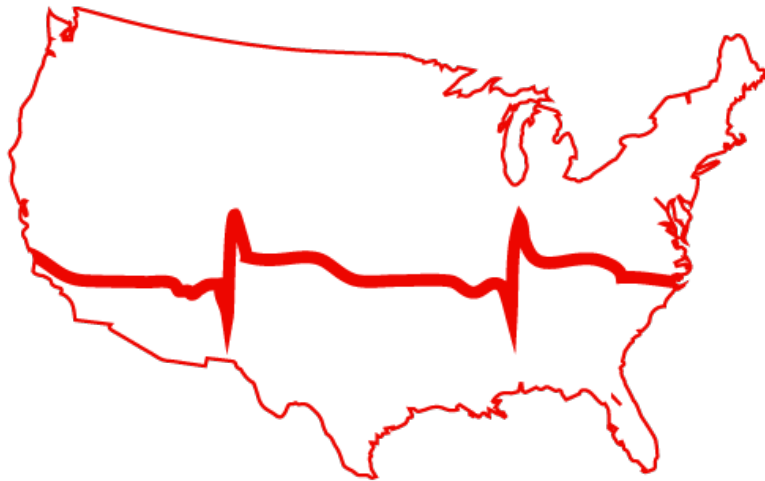
- Cover everyone
 - Have affordable options for consumers
 - Thinking broadly about good health
 - Include oral health care
 - Include behavioral health services
- 



Coverage for Everyone



The Affordable Care Act & Medicaid



PROTECT OUR
CARE

Public Charge

- New federal proposed regulations redefining “public charge”
- May impact legal immigrants and their US-born children



Who is a “Public Charge”

Current programs included:

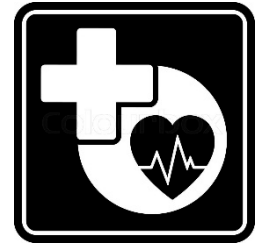
- Social Security
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Payment for long-term care institutionalization



Who is a “Public Charge”

New health programs:

- MassHealth (except MassHealth Limited)
- Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Subsidy



New nutrition & housing programs:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/food stamps)
- Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program & Project-Based Rental Assistance
- Public Housing





Affordable for Consumers

Prescription Drug Costs for Consumers

HelpLine callers and consumers at community events tell HCFA they cannot afford their prescriptions



Prescription Drug Costs for the Health Care System

- Massachusetts has the second highest health care spending level in the country – in part due to drug spending
- Health care cost growth has moderated (up just 1.6% last year), but prescription drug spending is still soaring



Prescription Drug Costs for the Health Care System



MassHealth:

- Prescription drug spending doubled in the past five years and is over \$2.2 billion


Commercial Plans:

- Total drug spending increased by an average of 6.65% (2015-2016)

Exploring State Options



Strengthen existing policies/programs:

- Limit direct drug marketing
 - Restrict discount “coupons” offered as part of drugmakers’ marketing efforts
 - Educate doctors on drug effectiveness and costs with academic detailing programs
- 

Exploring State Options



Reducing prescription drug pricing in public programs.

- Closed formulary proposal denied
- What more can be done to reduce these costs?

Exploring *New* State Options



Negotiating power:

- Targets for drug spending; review boards

Transparency:

- Require drug companies to reveal costs, profits, and marketing expenses allowing for transparent price evaluation

Other proposals:

- Reign-in pharmacy benefit manager abuse; enacting a state tax on drug price increases that exceed inflation; maximum selling price for generic drugs; monitoring the drug market to reject prices that are clearly unfair



Thinking Broadly About Health

Social Determinants of Health

- Social and economic factors impacting overall health
- Massachusetts is now focusing on preventing illness and maintaining health



Social Determinants of Health



- MassHealth ACOs are screening for health-related social needs such as housing insecurity, food insecurity, transportation needs, and exposure to violence
- ACOs must then refer patients to community social service providers
- MassHealth will now pay for some housing and food needs if there is a medical benefit



Oral Health Care



Oral Health Integration



- Oral health is a crucial part of overall health: medical and dental services should be integrated to improve patient outcomes
- Successful integration of oral health services can accomplish the Triple Aim goals of improving the patient experience, improving the health of populations and reducing per-capita health care spending.



Oral Health Access

- More than 530,000 people in MA live in federally designated dental care health shortage area



- Dental Therapists can improve access to essential oral health care, particularly in culturally- and linguistically-appropriate ways for underserved and vulnerable populations

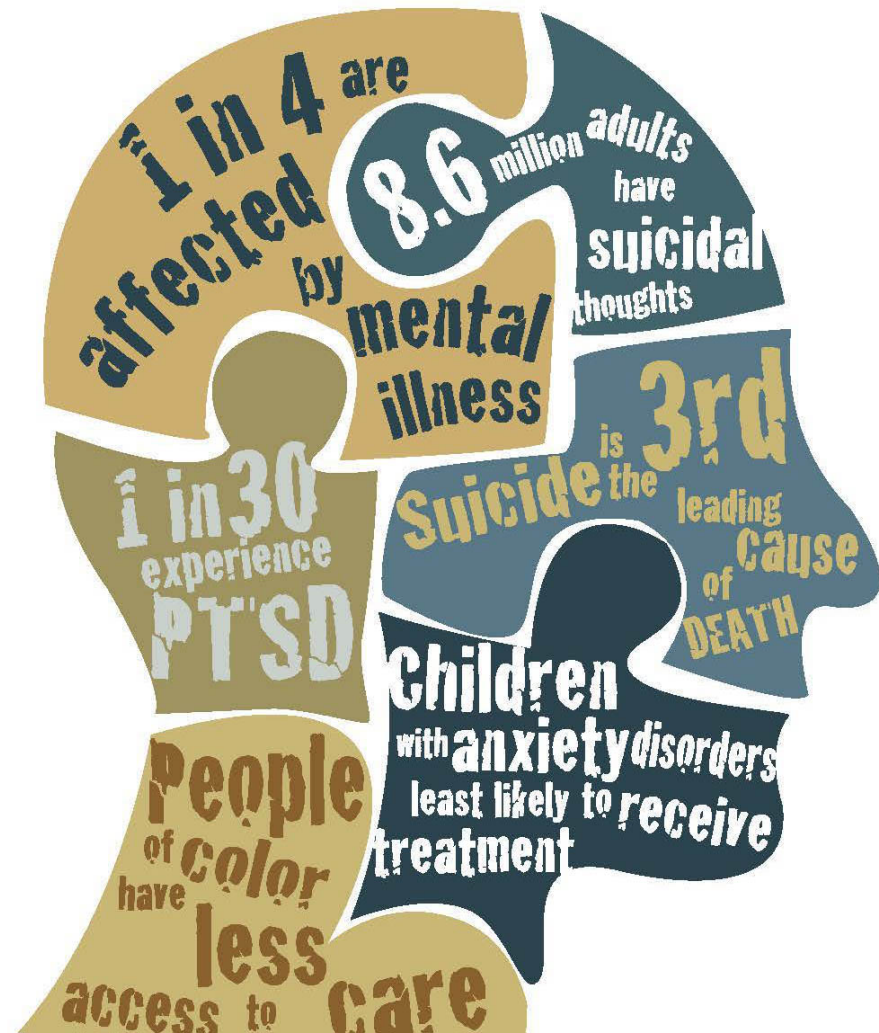


Behavioral Health Care



Behavioral Health Care

- Parity laws on the books but true integration of behavioral health into overall health is still needed
- Gaps in coverage and care are life threatening for many, particular those battling substance use disorders
- Children's mental health



Behavioral Health Care

Provider directories:

- Agreement between carriers and hospitals to centralize info for easier consumer use



MassHealth ACO program:

- Raise systemic issues identified by HCFA and the HelpLine
- Ensure children and families get essential services and benefit from the new ACO structures
- Identify issues from other partner organizations that work directly with families (Parent/Professional Advocacy League, Federation for Children with Special Needs, etc.)

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