

National Governors Association (NGA)
State-led approaches to health system reform

Organization Description: NGA is a bipartisan organization of the nation's governors that promotes visionary state leadership, shares best practices, and speaks with a unified voice on national policy. NGA maintains four standing committees – Economic Development and Commerce; Education, Early Childhood and Workforce; Health and Human Services; and Natural Resources – enabling governors to examine and develop policy proposals that address key state and national issues.

Proposal Summary: NGA's reform proposals are described in a series of policy position papers developed by specialized committees within the organization. NGA supports state-based approaches to expanding health coverage and improving wellness. NGA seeks improved coordination among different types of health care providers. It supports investments in HIT to improve efficiency, reduce errors, and limit costs.

- **Coverage:** NGA advocates to increase federal support for individual, state-based reform efforts to expand health care coverage to all residents. It encourages reforming the Employee Retirement and Income Security Act (ERISA) to permit states to impose requirements on self-funded plans, which are currently exempt. NGA seeks to expand health care access for uninsured children by reauthorizing the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), increasing funding for states facing shortfalls, and giving states additional flexibility to administer the program. NGA lobbies to expand states' ability to enroll pregnant women and children who are legal immigrants in Medicaid and SCHIP. NGA supports providing tax credits to small businesses and individuals for purchasing health insurance. It seeks to create alliances among small businesses to provide coverage for a large pool of workers. NGA supports efforts to find new, broader sources of health care financing to help expand coverage.
- **Wellness and Prevention:** NGA supports state initiatives to prevent obesity and other public health problems by promoting healthy choices, better nutrition, and increased physical activity. NGA's Healthy Kids, Healthy America program will award grants to states to implement initiatives that increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and prevent obesity among children.
- **Care Coordination:** NGA supports developing mechanisms and incentives to improve the coordination of care between primary, acute, and long-term care providers.
- **Health Information Technology (IT):** NGA recommends investing in information technology to control costs, improve efficiency, and reduce medical errors. NGA aims to create interoperable electronic health records to enable real time access. It also supports establishing universal data standards necessary to support, sustain, and secure the confidential exchange of health information.
- **Quality:** NGA seeks to empower consumer choice through price transparency, quality reporting, and financial incentives. It also supports expanding the availability of home- and community-based long-term care services.

- *Cost:* NGA supports deploying a standardized information system to will reduce the immense administrative costs of the current health care system. It also advocates to develop medical malpractice arbitration procedures that reduce frivolous claims.
- *Other:* Rely on a federal-state partnership to expand the public health infrastructure. Increase federal funding and state flexibility within the Medicaid program.

Proposal Date: 2006, 2007

Source: NGA Policy Positions,

<http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.7ff7d3aa7a36470a18d81fa6501010a0?vgnextoid=455c8aaa2ebbf00VgnVCM1000001a01010aRCD&vgnextfmt=policy>; NGA Press Releases,

<http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.cd3012220d4005eac3363d10501010a0?vgnextoid=759b8f2005361010VgnVCM1000001a01010aRCD>.