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Recommended health reform options aimed to improve Kansans' health

KHPA Board voted on 21 options at monthly Board meeting

After many months of reviewing health reform options and meeting with over 1,000 Kansans, the Kansas Health Policy Authority (KHPA) Board voted today to recommend to Governor Kathleen Sebelius and the Kansas Legislature 21 health reform options to achieve three important health goals. The goals are to promote personal responsibility, pay for prevention and promote medical homes, and provide and protect affordable health insurance.

“We took this responsibility of health reform options very seriously, and we are recommending policies that enhance the quality of life in Kansas, giving our businesses better opportunities to provide good health insurance to employees, encouraging Kansans to take more responsibility in their life, and ensuring our kids get a healthy start in life,” said Connie Hubbell, chairperson of the KHPA Board.

During the Board’s October meeting, which was held yesterday and today, the Board reviewed decided to recommend each of the following policy options.

Promoting Personal Responsibility

- Transparency for consumers: Health care cost & quality transparency project
- Promote health literacy

Promoting Medical Homes and Paying for Prevention

- Define medical home
- Increase Medicaid provider reimbursement
- Implement statewide Community Health Record
- Promote insurance card standardization
- Increase tobacco user fee
- Statewide ban on smoking in public places
- Partner with community organizations
- Include Commissioner of Education on KHPA Board
- Collect information on health/fitness of Kansas school children
- Promote healthy food choices in schools
- Increase Physical Education (PE)
- Wellness grant program for small businesses
- Healthier food options for state employees
- Provide dental care for pregnant women

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- Improve tobacco cessation within Medicaid
- Expand cancer screenings

Provide and Protect Affordable Health Insurance

- Cover more kids through aggressive marketing and outreach to enroll already eligible children
- Expand premium assistance to include childless adults up to 100% FPL
- Assisting small businesses by establishing a health insurance clearinghouse and other strategies

These options are expected to decrease the number of uninsured by 86,000 Kansans and result in greatly improved health status.

“Starting with the implementation of premium assistance this year, these options not only improve the health of Kansans but begin to transform our health and health care system, placing a larger emphasis on prevention and personal responsibility,” said Marcia Nielsen, PhD, MPH, Executive Director of KHPA.

Nielsen continued, “We offer these recommendations to the Governor and legislature as part of a long-term strategy to improve health, control health care costs, and improve access to care. Now its time that legislators engage on these critical issues, and I encourage all Kansans to talk to their legislator about the importance of health reform.”

The KHPA Board and staff will present a report of these recommended options to the Joint Committee on Health Policy Oversight on November 1.

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