

Highlights of Our Recent Activities and Accomplishments

SUBJECTS COVERED

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Health Reform Implementation

NHeLP submitted comments to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on the recently released Medicaid and exchange eligibility and enrollment regulations. While most of the regulations were issued as final rules, CMS designated certain sections for public comment. NHeLP will continue to advocate for strong protections for applicants and enrollees and work to ensure that the new streamlined eligibility processes meet the needs of low-income and underserved populations. Read our most recent [Medicaid comments here](#) and [exchange comments here](#)

. Read all of our previous ACA implementation comment letters [here](#)

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As co-chair of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Health Care Task Force, NHeLP helped draft comments on regulations governing "meaningful use" in electronic health records to CMS and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology. These comments focused on reinforcing federal civil rights and privacy laws; requiring robust demographic data collection and the use of that information; and building linkages with existing health disparity strategies. [Read the comments here](#) .

NHeLP continued to support advocates reviewing state proposals to integrate Medicaid and Medicare services for individuals dually eligible. NHeLP developed a topic-by-topic guide to help advocates reviewing state proposals issue-spot their proposals for problems and omissions. [Read the guide here](#)

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NHeLP also developed model standards to protect dually eligible individuals who are subject to passive enrollment in state integration programs. [Read the model standards here](#) . Specific to California, NHeLP submitted formal comments and concerns on the state's draft proposal to implement a dual eligible demonstration project and drafted a letter with a number of advocates outlining these concerns.

[Read the letter here](#)

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NHeLP worked in collaboration with California advocates and legislative staff and prepared an analysis of California's Essential Health Benefits (EHB) bills, Senate Bill 951 (Hernandez) and Assembly Bill 1453 (Monning). The two bills were recently amended in March, 2012 to include the state's selection of an EHB benchmark plan. NHeLP also led a call with California advocates about the Medicaid benchmark selection process and the intersection with EHBs. [Read NHeLP's analysis of the EHB bills here](#)

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NHeLP contributed comments concerning Qualified Health Plan selection to the California

Exchange Board on March 29, 2012. The comments were submitted on behalf of NHeLP and the Health Consumer Alliance, and emphasized the importance of ensuring that low-income consumers who purchase health care coverage through the Exchange have real access to the services they need and are able to find culturally competent providers. NHeLP's comments were praised by members of the Exchange Board for highlighting important consumer issues.

[Read the comments here](#)

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Reproductive Health

NHeLP released two new publications explaining how the Affordable Care Act will increase access to contraceptives for women. Section 2713 of the ACA requires that new insurance plans cover a number of women's preventive health services, without cost-sharing, including all FDA-approved methods of contraception. In addition, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has clarified that these preventive services are also part of the Essential Health Benefits (EHB) package that must be included for individuals newly eligible for Medicaid, in the Basic Health Program, and in plans sold through the exchanges. [Read NHeLP's issue brief on the preventive services standards and contraceptive coverage here](#)

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[Read NHeLP's short summary chart on the preventive health requirements here](#)

. The contraceptive coverage requirement has attracted strong opposition from the Catholic Church, which is advocating for a very broad refusal clause that would deny hundreds of thousands of women access to contraceptives. NHeLP is actively engaged in preserving these critical services.

[Click here to read NHeLP's issue brief on health care refusals and contraception](#)

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