How Federal Health Care Reform Affects States

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Wednesday, March 31, 2010 at 12:00 AM

State eNews Issue #43 | March 31, 2010 [2]

Landmark federal health reform has passed and as state leaders consider that and other effects, The Council of State Governments launched a new federal health care reform resources Web site [3] and will host a free webinar [4] April 6 to provide an overview of what federal health care reform means for the states.

The webinar features CSG Washington, D.C., Office Director Chris Whatley and two senior RAND Health Division staff who will provide an overview of the more than 2,500 pages of adopted health reform legislation and the implications for states. The required expansion of Medicaid to all individuals not on Medicare and below 133 percent of poverty is estimated by the Congressional Budget Office to carry a cost of $20 billion to states in the next decade.

Given the variety of Medicaid state plans already in force across the nation, some states may be winners because they’ve already expanded eligibility with state dollars and now can transfer all state expenses to the federally matched Medicaid program. But other states may face new funding requirements given the expanded eligibility beginning in 2014. States will also have a role to play in monitoring health insurance reforms, creating health insurance exchanges and maintaining health insurance high risk pools.

A new page on the CSG Web site [3] features up-to-date resources to help state leaders understand the new health reform law. Both popular media summaries and more detailed analysis are provided. CSG will also gather questions from state officials to guide the organization’s future work on health reform.

The CSG Economic Summit of the States in New York City May 20–23 will also feature a plenary session on federal health care reform and implications for states. The session will be 10–11:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 20, and is open to all attendees. This plenary will be the beginning of what CSG expects to be a rich, ongoing discussion of the federal and state roles in the numerous changes enacted into federal law earlier this month. Health care spending consumes one-sixth of the national domestic product and the major change to the system is a complex undertaking. CSG is quickly gearing up to assist state leaders with that change.

CSG Resources

- CSG Webinar, “Rx for Health Reform: How the New Health Insurance Law Will Affect States,” Tuesday, April 6, 2–3:30 p.m. EDT [4]
USA Today Legislation Summary [6]
Kaiser Family Foundation Detailed Summary of Legislative Provisions [7]

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