The Uncertain Future of Health Care

By Debra Miller [1]
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Friday, December 15, 2:30 – 4 p.m. PST, South Seas Ballroom IJ

Presented by CSG Health Public Policy Committee

As Congress worked to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act in 2017, it became clear that Americans across the political spectrum care deeply about health care policy—and that state leaders are not willing to stand by and wait. Top issues identified in public opinion polling include high prescription drug costs, rising health insurance premiums, unsustainable Medicaid spending and the alarming opioid epidemic gripping the nation. While states must necessarily accommodate federal health policy, state leaders are actively involved in working across partisan lines and developing state solutions to these issues that are results-oriented and evidence-based. This session heard from three speakers who examined ways in which states are both reacting to federal efforts and leading the charge to create sound health policy.

- "Federal Health Developments: Opportunities and Challenges for States," Laura Summers, senior director, State Intelligence, Leavitt Partner
- "Medicaid Innovations to Address the Social Determinants of Health," Karin VanZant, executive director, Life Services Division, CareSource
- "Evidence-based Solutions to Expand Access to Treatment of Opioid Use Disorders," Cynthia Reilly, director, Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Initiative, The Pew Charitable Trusts

The Health Public Policy Committee considered two policy resolutions and recommended their adoption by the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. The resolutions were approved by the IGA Committee and ultimately adopted by the CSG Executive Committee on Dec. 16:

- Resolution on Sale of Insurance Across State Lines [7]

Finally, a new CSG research report, "Diabetes in the United States: Examining Growth Trends, State Funding Sources and Economic Impact," was formally released. CSG surveyed all 50 states to discover how many states appropriated funds for diabetes prevention and management in 2017. One half of the states appropriated funds either specifically for diabetes prevention and treatment or for more general public health purposes that might include a focus on diabetes. The amount of the funding varied from a high of $6.6 million in Colorado to $5,000 in South Dakota. Click here [9] for a copy of the CSG press release on the report.

Speaker Biographies

Cynthia Reilly [10], Director, Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Initiative, The Pew Charitable Trusts
Reilly directs Pew's work on federal and state initiatives to reduce inappropriate use of prescription opioids while ensuring patient access to effective pain management. She also focuses on expanding access to effective treatment for substance use disorders through increased use of medication-assisted treatment. Previously, Reilly worked on issues related to the safety and quality of medication use for the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists.


Summers has expertise in economics, health care, and public policy. In health care, Summer’s research focus is state-level health reform, with a focus in Medicaid and health insurance exchanges. She provides project management and research support for Leavitt Partners teams responsible for assisting states design and develop state-based health insurance exchanges, 1115 Medicaid demonstration waivers and amendments, and other state health reforms.

Karin VanZant, [12] Executive Director, Life Services Division, CareSource

VanZant heads a division of CareSource, a non-profit Medicaid managed care company in five states, that provides economic and social supports to transition Medicaid enrollees off government subsidies into a high-quality life of gainful employment. Prior to joining CareSource, VanZant was the co-founder and executive director of Think Tank, Inc., a non-profit encouraging collaboration to promote a more connected and economically prosperous community.

Click [here] [2] for the meeting agenda.

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