

# THE CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

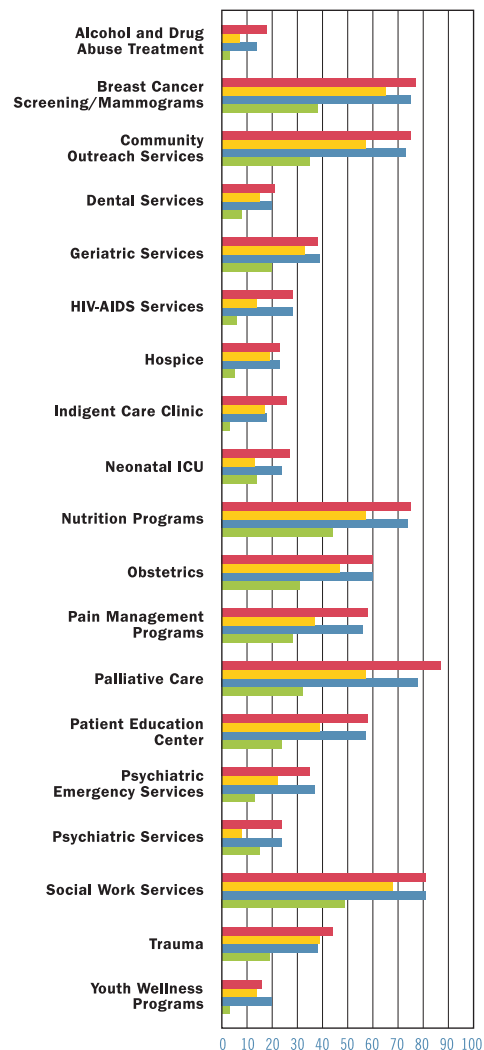
# Advocacy Agenda

2017-2018 (115th CONGRESS)

## PERCENT OF U.S. HOSPITALS OFFERING SELECTED PUBLIC HEALTH AND SPECIALTY SERVICES

Catholic hospitals often provide a higher percentage of public health and specialty services than other health care providers. These organizations' dedication to the common good often leads them to offer these traditionally "unprofitable" services.

- Catholic
- State/Local Government
- Other Not-for-Profit
- Investor-Owned (For-Profit)



Source: 2015 American Hospital Association Annual Survey.

## ABOUT CHA

The Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA) is the national leadership organization of the Catholic health ministry, representing the largest not-for-profit provider of health care services in the nation. By pursuing the priorities of the ministry, CHA is working to create health care that serves everyone. All 50 states and the District of Columbia are served by Catholic health care organizations providing acute care, skilled nursing and other services including hospice, home health, assisted living and senior housing.

Our advocacy is grounded in the core values that form the CHA *Vision for U.S. Health Care*:

**HUMAN DIGNITY:** Because each person is created in the image of God, each life is sacred and possesses inalienable worth. Health care is essential to promoting and protecting the inherent dignity of every individual from conception to natural death.

**CONCERN FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE:** The moral measure of society is how it treats the poor and vulnerable, who are particularly marginalized by a lack of access to health care.

**JUSTICE:** Health care is a basic human right alongside food and shelter, all of which are necessary for individuals to participate fully in society.

**COMMON GOOD:** The health and well-being of each person is intertwined with the health and well-being of the broader community. Access to health care is an essential element contributing to the common good alongside others such as education, employment and a safe environment.

**STEWARDSHIP:** Our societal resources are finite, and we must make wise choices for how they are allocated. Health care resources should focus on the well-being of the community and be structured to deliver the care that is most medically beneficial and promotes public health.

**PLURALISM:** The health care system should allow and encourage involvement of the public and private sectors including voluntary, religious and not-for-profit organizations, and it should respect the religious and ethical values of patients and health care providers alike.

# Our Priorities for the 115th Congress

## ENSURING ACCESS AND COVERAGE FOR ALL

As stated in our *Vision*, CHA strongly advocates a health care system in which everyone has access to quality and affordable care. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has taken significant steps toward expanding access to health insurance coverage, and improving the quality of care in our delivery system. In this Congress, we will work to:

- ✦ Enhance affordability, accessibility and quality of coverage for all, paying special attention to low-income and vulnerable individuals
- ✦ Ensure continued access and coverage for the 20 million Americans who have gained insurance coverage under the ACA, including those with pre-existing and chronic conditions
- ✦ Pursue innovative policy approaches for delivering care to improve access and outcomes and reduce costs through integration, coordination and prevention
- ✦ Improve access to mental and behavioral health services to ensure coordinated and holistic care
- ✦ Ensure the availability of care in both rural and urban underserved areas

## MAINTAINING A STRONG SAFETY NET

The Catholic health ministry is committed to serving those in need, young and old, throughout every stage of life, and to advocating on their behalf. We support:

- ✦ The entitlement of the Medicare and Medicaid programs to protect the health and well-being of seniors and vulnerable low-income individuals

- ✦ The state option for Medicaid coverage expansion for all low-income individuals
- ✦ The reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program
- ✦ Efforts to improve care coordination and quality outcomes in Medicare, Medicaid and other safety net programs
- ✦ Policies to provide adequate and sustainable financing, particularly for disproportionate share hospitals, to ensure the ability of health care providers to provide quality, compassionate care
- ✦ Access to affordable drugs for low-income individuals through such efforts as the 340(b) drug discount program

## STRENGTHENING AGING AND CHRONIC CARE SERVICES

CHA strongly supports advanced care planning, chronic care management and efforts to coordinate and integrate person-centered health care services along the continuum of care while protecting the inherent dignity of every individual. We support:

- ✦ Improved access to palliative care for those suffering the pain and stress of serious illness, as a core component of the health care system
- ✦ Sustainable financing for long-term care facilities and services
- ✦ Improved coordination of care for those with chronic or serious illnesses
- ✦ Choices for elders and persons with disabilities to receive long-term care services in the most appropriate care setting, whether at home, in the community (such as PACE) or in a facility

## PROTECTING LIFE AND ENSURING CONSCIENCE PROTECTION

Mission and identity are integral and indispensable aspects of Catholic health care. We support measures that allow our providers to protect and defend human life from conception to natural death. We will work to:

- ✦ Preserve and strengthen existing provider conscience protections that allow us to provide care consistent with our faith
- ✦ Advocate policies that acknowledge our religious, ethical and moral values

## IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF COMMUNITIES

In addition to providing care, the Catholic health ministry is committed to population health and improving the health and well-being of our communities. We support policies to:

- ✦ Eliminate disparities in health care access, services, quality and outcomes, and to address the social determinants of health including education, poverty and violence
- ✦ Further our mission to care for those in need through community benefit programs, strengthening not-for-profit health care, and to protect tax-exempt status
- ✦ Address social justice issues to eliminate human trafficking, protect immigrant communities, promote affordable housing, and promote environmental responsibility