



## BUILDING CONSENSUS FOR CHANGE:

*A Guide to Organizing Roundtable  
Discussions on Health Reform*





March 18, 2008

Dear Catholic Health Care Ministries:

We are approaching a defining moment in the future of American health care. As our nation moves toward the election of a new president and Congress, health care continues to be front and center in the national conversation. People across the country support health care reform—more than ever before. We have an unprecedented and important opportunity to build consensus for change in our health care system—and to bring messages from Catholic social teaching to the dialogue.

Over the next few months, the health care reform discussion will surely intensify. During this time, the Catholic Health Association is urging individuals and organizations to take a moment to consider the values and priorities that should drive health reform in America—and how we can build and sustain consensus for productive change.

**You can help spark serious and insightful dialogue on health reform by planning a roundtable discussion in your community.** This step-by-step guide provides the tips and templates you need to organize a values-based dialogue. The Catholic health ministry's principles for reform, outlined in "Our Vision for U.S. Health Care," can serve as a starting point from which to discuss our shared values and hopes.

To learn more about CHA's "Vision for U.S. Health Care" and its Principles for Health Reform, visit [www.chausa.org](http://www.chausa.org).

There has never been a more important time to encourage a national discussion on this issue and inspire others to consider a values-based approach to reform. Please join us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sr. Carol Keehan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Sr. Carol Keehan, DC, President and Chief Executive Officer  
Catholic Health Association of the United States

## ***Table of Contents***

1. Planning a Successful Discussion: A Step-by-Step Guide	4
2. Getting the Media's Attention	9
3. Planning Timeline	11
4. Template Run-of-Show	13
5. Template Press Advisory	15
6. Template Talking Points	
Moderator	16
Catholic Hospital Executive	19
Health Care Provider	22
Elected Official	23
Business Leader	24
Health Care Advocate	25
Mission Leader, Chaplain, Bishop or Other Faith Leader	26
Uninsured Spokesperson	27
7. Moderator Q&A Guide	28
8. Looking Ahead	31

## Planning a Successful Discussion: A Step-by-Step Guide

### ***STEP ONE: CREATE A PLANNING COMMITTEE***

Convene a small organizing committee to help in the planning of your discussion. This committee and optional subcommittees will play an essential role in determining everything from the date and time of your event to your speakers and the formal agenda. Try to engage a diverse mix of individuals to ensure a balanced process from the early planning stages to the end of your event. You may also consider inviting individuals with earned media or public relations experience to lend their expertise in planning and promoting the event. Roles can be broken down into three distinct categories:

- **Outreach:** The outreach subcommittee will be responsible for selecting and securing the participation of a moderator and panel of speakers as well as promoting the event to the public and coordinating crowd-building.
- **Event Planning:** The event planning subcommittee will be responsible for determining the basic operations of the event. This includes developing an agenda and run-of-show and determining which questions guide the discussion.
- **Media:** This committee will be responsible for conducting outreach to key reporters, drafting media materials and coordinating other media activities.

If you are planning a roundtable discussion, CHA wants to know! Please contact Phil Hinz at 314-253-3484 or [phinz@chausa.org](mailto:phinz@chausa.org) to share your plans for an event and to receive additional assistance.

### ***STEP TWO: CHOOSE A DATE, TIME AND LOCATION***

Three important things to keep in mind when planning your event are neutrality, accessibility and timing. Make sure to pick a neutral location that does not give the impression of favoring one speaker over another and is convenient for all attendees. Also make sure that the proposed date and time work for everyone involved.

**Date and Time:** Asking a few key questions before you select a date and time can help ensure increased attendance and media coverage.

- Is it best to hold the event on a weekday or over the weekend?
  - The press is more likely to cover events that take place during the week.
- Should it be held during the day or in the evening?
  - Mid-morning events will likely attract more reporters.
- Am I competing with other events?
  - Make sure to research other events being planned in your community. You'll want to schedule your event accordingly in order to attract media coverage and ensure strong attendance.

**Location:** Potential venues must be neutral for your speakers and should offer sufficient parking and accessibility via public transportation. Possible locations include a university facility, hospital auditorium or your local PBS studio. The venue should be easy to locate



and the specific room where the roundtable discussion will be held should be clearly marked for participants and audience members. Make sure to check for ample space to comfortably seat speakers, press and audience members.

### ***STEP THREE: DEVELOP AN AGENDA AND DEFINE THE MAIN MESSAGE OF THE EVENT***

The Catholic health care ministry has a unique and powerful message to relay when it comes to health reform. Through its values-based approach to fixing our nation's health system, it has the opportunity to unite business leaders, elected officials, health care advocates, providers and others around a core set of values and principles that must be upheld when implementing reform. While there is likely disagreement among these constituencies on how to achieve reform, chances are there is a core set of values that can be agreed upon and used to measure the effectiveness of proposed policy and legislation.

As you develop the content of your discussion, keep in mind the uniqueness of this approach at a time when it's easy to get bogged down in political rhetoric of health reform. By centering the discussion on our shared values and priorities, we're more likely to reach common ground in this highly charged environment.

The diversity of your panel also sends a powerful message of building broad consensus. Encourage each panelist to talk about their first-hand experience with the issue to emphasize the many different motivations for achieving reform. While speakers will often want to draft their own remarks, providing sample talking points to speakers will help set the tone of the event and also remind them of the limited time they've been given. *See page 16 of this guide for template talking points.*

As you tailor your program, consider the following:

- Provide an overview of “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care” at the top of the program to provide context for the subsequent discussion. *Order copies of “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care” at [www.chausa.org/resources](http://www.chausa.org/resources) to distribute at your event and use the Vision PowerPoint presentation at [www.chausa.org/visionresources](http://www.chausa.org/visionresources) to kick off your discussion.*
- Ask questions that spark substantive discussion among your panelists and are relevant to your community. *See the sample discussion questions on page 28 of this guide.*
- Highlight the steps toward health reform your community is taking or can take and develop action items to create change.
- Showcase the charity care your hospital or health system provides by distributing community benefit reports at your event. Encourage other participants to distribute information on what they're doing to advance reform.

### ***STEP FOUR: SELECT A MODERATOR***

A moderator can help set the tone for the event and ensure that no single group or individual dominates the discussion. The moderator should be a respected member of the community who is viewed as neutral on the topic of health care reform.

Possible moderators include:

- A local journalist or television news anchor
- A county judge or other civic leader
- A local professor or dean

Because the moderator will play an integral role in the success of the discussion, they must become familiar with all background materials, meet with planners and speakers prior to the event, and serve as a media spokesperson.

#### ***STEP FIVE: INVITE SPEAKERS***

Discussion participants should represent different sides of the health care debate. To help attract media coverage, recruit speakers with a high profile in the community.

Suggestions for speakers include:

- Catholic Hospital Executive: a hospital executive can outline CHA's "Our Vision for U.S. Health Care" and explain why a values-based approach can help achieve consensus and real change.
- Health Care Provider: a health care provider can talk about their first-hand experience and underscore the urgency for reform.
- Elected Official: an elected official should talk about their commitment to achieving health reform.
- Business Leader: a business leader should convey the business community's struggle with the rising cost of coverage and the need for reform that works for employers and employees.
- Health Care Advocate: a health care advocate can talk about the consequences of living without coverage and what's being done at the state level to address the issue.
- Mission Leader, Chaplain, Bishop or Other Faith Leader: a faith leader can stress the moral imperative for fixing our system.
- Uninsured Spokesperson: an uninsured spokesperson can share their personal story of being uninsured, helping to put a real face on the issue. Consider having your uninsured spokesperson deliver remarks at the front of the program only to avoid having to answer policy questions during the moderated roundtable discussion.

#### ***STEP SIX: CREATE A RUN-OF-SHOW***

Like the agenda, a clear and concise run-of-show will help guide a successful discussion. The run-of-show should be shared with all event speakers and the moderator before the event but not with the audience or media. We recommend keeping the length of your event between 60 and 90 minutes to avoid fatigue among speakers, the media and audience members. *A sample run-of-show is included on page 13 of this guide.*

#### ***STEP SEVEN: MEDIA OUTREACH***

Develop media materials, including a press advisory (*a sample press advisory can be found on page 15 of this guide*) and press release, and gather background materials that will make it easy for reporters to write a story on your event. Pitch reporters at least one

week out from the event. Be sure to offer “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care” and key facts on the issue. You may also consider brushing up on the most recent stories on health reform in your community to get a sense of what type of coverage this issue has received and how you can point out the uniqueness of a values-based approach to reform. Also secure spokespersons to speak with the media following your event. See “*Getting the Media’s Attention*” on page 9 for a breakdown of steps for reaching out to the media.

#### ***STEP EIGHT: BRIEF MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS***

After inviting and confirming the participation of the moderator and speakers, consider convening a meeting prior to the event to discuss each person’s role and outline the goals of the event. During the briefing, you may want to:

- Provide each participant with key documents for the event, including suggested remarks, draft media materials and a copy of CHA’s “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care”
- Instead of sharing the suggested moderator questions with the speakers, give them a general idea about the possible questions that will be asked of them. This will prevent the speakers from reading prepared statements during the event.
- Offer tips about talking with the media and, if possible, list media that you expect to attend
- Review event logistics such as suggested arrival times, on-stage seating arrangements, directions and parking

#### ***STEP NINE: PROMOTE THE EVENT***

After confirming the participation of a moderator and panel of speakers, the next step is to promote the event to the public. Every effort should be made to ensure a large and balanced audience. You may want to consider asking for RSVPs to help gauge attendance and guide your event set up. Audience members can be pursued in the following ways:

- Ask community organizations to promote the event to their members via their Web sites, listservs and newsletters
- Promote the event with signs and posters in well-traveled areas in your community
- Post information at local health care organizations and institutions
- Ask your panelists to promote the event through their networks

#### ***STEP TEN: ADVANCE THE EVENT***

Review a checklist of event-day action steps. While each checklist will be different, here are a few ideas of what to include:

- ✓ Call all media outlets to confirm attendance
- ✓ Set up event
  - Staging
  - Seating
  - Registration and media check-in table – prepare the table to sign in attendees and members of the media to help with follow-up and to keep track of event attendance.
  - Food and beverage

- Sectioned-off area for TV cameras
- ✓ Call through RSVPs to confirm attendance
- ✓ Print copies of the program

***STEP ELEVEN: THANK PARTICIPANTS AND FOLLOW UP***

Send thank you letters to panelists and members of your planning committee. Consider also sending a copy of “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care” or the CHA health reform tool to encourage continued discussion in your community. Also follow up with members of the media who did not attend your event but might be interested in writing about health reform in the future.



# Getting the Media's Attention

Diverse participants discussing an issue that is top of mind with voters will help attract the media's interest. A key to the success of the roundtable will be leveraging this initial level of interest from the media into significant media coverage. The following steps will help to successfully engage the media in your roundtable discussion:

## 1. Develop a press list:

- Include television, radio and print reporters, as well as columnists from local papers, and encourage them to write a story on how the issue of health reform affects business owners, employees, hospitals and others.
- Include the press staff of any elected officials who will be participating.
- Utilize the public relations staff of organizations involved in the planning of the event as a helpful resource in refining the press list and pitching the event.

## 2. Draft media materials:

- Provide reporters with a press kit that gives them a background on the issue and helps them formulate their story. The press kit should include:
  - An agenda
  - Biographies of speakers and the moderator
  - A press release that includes a quote from one or more speakers.
  - Fact sheets about the issue that include state- or community-specific data, if available.
  - CHA's "Our Vision for U.S. Health Care"

## 3. Consider soliciting media partners:

- Contact your local NPR station about broadcasting the event or featuring a segment with your speakers.
- Pitch a joint appearance by two or more of the roundtable speakers to a weekly television public affairs show.

## 4. Promote the event locally:

- Send a press advisory that includes a short description of the event (e.g., date, time, location and contact information) to television, radio and newspaper contacts who can put the event on their community calendar. *A template press advisory is included on page 15 of this guide.*
- Contact the appropriate Associated Press (AP) bureau at least one week in advance to get the event on their daybook. Assignment editors from many media outlets check the daybook to learn about upcoming newsworthy events. Visit [www.ap.org/pages/contact/contact.html](http://www.ap.org/pages/contact/contact.html) to find the AP bureau covering your region.

## 5. Pitch the event to reporters:

- Prepare a short set of talking points and a list of targeted reporters.

- E-mail the press advisory to reporters.
- Call reporters the week of the event to encourage them to attend the event and cover the story.
- When speaking to a reporter, frame the story by highlighting the diverse panel coming together to build consensus around shared values in health reform and underscore the uniqueness of this values-based approach to reform.
- Provide supplementary information to assist reporters in writing the story by offering any recent state-specific research and spokespeople primed to discuss the issue. You may consider having an uninsured spokesperson on hand to provide their personal experience.

#### **6. Conduct editorial outreach:**

- Prepare an op-ed on the issue and work to secure a local elected official or other respected community leader to tailor and submit it to local newspapers.

# Planning Timeline

## ***6 weeks before the event***

- Develop a list of community volunteers who will assist in planning and participating in the roundtable
- Schedule a kick-off meeting to begin planning the roundtable
- Begin to identify and select potential speakers and moderators

## ***5 weeks before the event***

- Hold a kick-off meeting with volunteers
  - Collect contact information from each volunteer at the meeting
  - Establish outreach, event planning and media subcommittees
  - Discuss budget and funding sources
  - Discuss any fundraising needs with volunteers
  - Brainstorm event dates, times and locations
  - Set a schedule for regular meetings or conference calls
- Distribute a master contact sheet to all volunteers
- Visit potential venues
- Identify event-related costs and set the budget accordingly
- Secure the event date, time and location
- Contact potential speakers and moderators
- Discuss a media partnership with your local NPR station and other local radio stations

## ***4 weeks before the event***

- Formally invite speakers
- Solicit help from volunteers, speakers and the moderator in building a list of people to invite to the event
- Finalize contracts with vendors (catering, audio/visual services)

## ***3 weeks before the event***

- Confirm all roundtable panelists
- Draft an agenda and run-of-show for the event
- Designate spokespeople for the event who will participate in interviews with the media
- Send out community calendar listings
- Begin drafting media materials, including the press advisory and press release
- Obtain bios from panelists
- Send invitations to potential attendees

## ***2 weeks before the event***

- Create a day-of-event checklist and delegate specific tasks to volunteers
- Arrange a meeting with the local newspaper's editorial board
- Finalize the press advisory and other content for press kits

- Brief speakers, moderator and spokespeople with event and media information
- Continue to promote attendance

### ***1 week before the event***

- Walk through the venue and finalize all logistics; if possible, invite the moderator and speakers to become familiar with the layout and location of the event
- Confirm details with vendors
- Distribute template talking points to speakers
- Finalize the press release
- Fax or e-mail reporters the press advisory describing the date, time and location of the event; a list of participants; and contact information
- Assign specific day-of-event duties to volunteers (i.e., media check-in, staffing each speaker and moderator, set-up/tear down of the venue; ensuring timeliness of the program)
- Buy disposable cameras or secure a volunteer photographer to take photos of the event
- Conduct editorial board visits

### ***Week of the roundtable discussion***

- Hold a final meeting to run through any last-minute changes and refine details
- Schedule pre-event interviews with spokespeople
- Assign volunteers throughout the community to promote the event and encourage attendance
- Assemble press kits with the agenda, biographies, press advisory, press release and fact sheets
- *Four days before the event:* Fax the press advisory, make follow-up calls to media contacts and contact your local Associated Press daybook editor
- *One day before the event:* Follow-up with media contacts to remind them of the event
- *Morning of event:* Call or e-mail media contacts to confirm attendance and send the press release

### ***Following the event***

- Follow up with reporters who were unable to attend the event
- Assess media coverage of the event
- Send thank you notes to the moderator, speakers, volunteers, etc.
- Confirm with vendors that all rented equipment has been returned

# Template Run-of-Show

## Roundtable Discussion

[DATE]

[TIME]

[LOCATION]

- 9:30 a.m. Welcome and Introductions, Moderator  
*The moderator welcomes participants, introduces panelists and sets the tone and context for a values-based discussion on health reform.*
- Moderator welcomes the audience and outlines the purpose of the discussion (slide 2 of the PowerPoint) and asks the audience to prepare questions for the Q&A that follows the panel discussion
  - Moderator introduces the panelists
  - Moderator presents slide 3 of the PowerPoint to highlight the urgency of health reform
    - Overview of the issue
      - The uninsured & rising health care costs
- 9:40 a.m. Remarks From Catholic Hospital Executive  
*The hospital executive outlines the values and principles presented in “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care” and why a values-based approach can help achieve consensus and real change.*
- Hospital executive presents slides 4-7 of the PowerPoint
    - We Can Inspire Change
    - Overview of “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care”
      - Core values at the root of reform
      - Principles to guide policy
- 9:45 a.m. Remarks From Health Care Provider  
*A health care provider talks about their first-hand experience and underscores the urgency for reform.*
- 9:47 a.m. Remarks From Elected Official  
*An elected official talks about their commitment to achieving health reform.*
- 9:49 a.m. Remarks From Business Leader  
*A business leader conveys the business community’s struggle with the rising cost of coverage and the need for reform that works for employers and employees alike.*
- 9:51 a.m. Remarks From Health Care Advocate  
*A health care advocate talks about the consequences of living without coverage in their community and what’s being done at the state level to address the issue.*
- 9:53 a.m. Remarks From Mission Leader, Chaplain, Bishop or Other Faith Leader  
*A faith leader speaks to the moral imperative of fixing our system.*



- 9:55 a.m.      Remarks From Uninsured Spokesperson  
*An uninsured spokesperson talks about their personal experience with being uninsured and helps put a real face on the issue.*
- 9:57 a.m.      Moderated Roundtable Discussion  
*The discussion is centered on the values we share in achieving reform. The moderator presents specific questions relevant to today's discussion on health and health care but relates questions back to the vision presented by CHA.*
- Health care in the United States should be:
    - Available and Accessible to Everyone
      - Questions focus on how we provide quality health coverage to everyone
    - Health and Prevention Oriented
      - Questions focus on managing chronic disease and the importance of prevention
    - Sufficiently and Fairly Financed
      - Questions focus on how everyone must play a role in financing a system that works
    - Transparent and Consensus Driven
      - Questions focus on the need for compromise, consensus building and efforts to contain costs
    - Patient Centered
      - Questions focus on the coordination between the patient, family/caregiver and provider in delivering the best possible care, and how the system can monitor and improve health outcomes
    - Safe and Effective and Designed to Deliver the Greatest Possible Quality
      - Questions focus on health care technology and evidence-based medicine
- 10:40 a.m.      Audience Q&A  
*The moderator guides the audience in raising questions to the panelists.*
- 10:55 a.m.      Closing, Moderator
- Moderator encourages the audience to:
    - Reflect on what values will guide them as they consider health reform
    - Use the CHA health reform study tool to help organize thoughts on health reform proposals
    - Continue a values-based dialogue in their community
    - Visit [www.chausa.org](http://www.chausa.org) for more information on CHA's Vision
- 11:00 a.m.      Program Ends  
*Organizer works to set up media interviews with panelists.*

## Template Press Advisory

Press Advisory:  
[DATE]

Contact:  
[NAME]  
[PHONE NUMBER]

### LOCAL LEADERS GATHER TO HELP BUILD CONSENSUS FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM

*Roundtable discussion to center around a values-based approach to health reform*

[CITY, STATE] – On [INSERT DATE], [INSERT NAME OF SEVERAL HIGH-PROFILE SPEAKERS] will join with leaders from the [HEALTH/BUSINESS/FAITH] community for a roundtable discussion on health reform in [CITY/STATE] and across the country. Panelists will discuss what values should drive reform, as well as what each of us can do to build consensus for achieving real change.

The discussion is one of many being organized across the country by Catholic health care ministries to encourage a values-based approach to health reform. The Catholic Health Association, in partnership with its ministry of providers across the country, has outlined principles for reform in “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care,” available at [www.chausa.org/healthreform](http://www.chausa.org/healthreform).

**What:** Building Consensus for Change: A Roundtable Discussion on Health Reform

**Who:** [ELECTED OFFICIAL]  
[CATHOLIC HOSPITAL EXECUTIVE]  
[BUSINESS LEADER]  
[FAITH LEADER]  
[HEALTH CARE PROVIDER]  
[HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE]  
[UNINSURED SPOKESPERSON]

**Where:** [LOCATION NAME]  
[ROOM NUMBER]  
[STREET ADDRESS]  
[CITY, STATE ZIP]

**When:** [DATE AND TIME]

The Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), founded in 1915, supports the Catholic health ministry's pursuit of the strategic directions of mission, ethics, and advocacy. As the nation's largest group of not-for-profit sponsors, systems, and facilities, the ministry is committed to improving the health status of communities and creating quality and compassionate health care that works for everyone.

# Template Talking Points

## Moderator

### Welcome

- I'd like to welcome everyone to today's roundtable discussion on health reform hosted by [LOCAL HEALTH MINISTRY/HOSPITAL] as part of a national series of discussions organized by Catholic health care providers. Thank you for joining us.
- Our esteemed panelists span many sectors of society, all of which share a strong interest in fixing our nation's health system.

### Purpose of Discussion

- While we sometimes disagree on specific health policies, I think we'll find today there is a lot we do agree on.
- From caring for one another to focusing on wellness and prevention, there are common values among us that shape our vision of an improved health system and a healthier nation.
- We're here today to take a step back from the politics of health reform that surround us during this busy election season and instead discuss the values and principles that should guide future action and legislation.
- We plan to engage in a serious and substantive discussion on the best ways to achieve health reform while holding true to our values, and we hope this conversation will continue among the many different groups who must work together to reform our system.

- I'd like to thank the Catholic Health Association for laying the groundwork for this discussion and many like it in communities across the country. We're going to hear from [CATHOLIC HOSPITAL EXECUTIVE] in a moment about the values and principles Catholic health care providers have identified as key to improving the health of our country. We'll then begin our discussion on how we can approach health reform from a values-based perspective. The goal is for us to come to a consensus around a core set of values and principles which, in the long run, will help measure our progress and keep us on track.

### **Introductions**

- We are pleased to have such a distinguished panel of community leaders and experts on hand. Joining us today are...[INTRODUCE PANELISTS]

### **Overview of Issue**

- To start, I'd like to provide a quick overview of health care in America today – and remind us all why this discussion and others like it are so important.
- Our health care system offers some of the best treatment and technology available anywhere in the world and has a lot to be proud of. Unfortunately, the system has a lot of shortcomings, too—from too many people marginalized or left out entirely to a lack of focus on prevention and disease management.
- Forty-seven million people in the United States are uninsured, including more than 9 million children.
- The uninsured are forced to delay care, often resulting in preventable illness and increased cost for everyone. And the Institute of Medicine estimates that 18,000 people die each year because they don't have health insurance.

- The federal government projects that by 2017, total health care spending will double to more than \$4 trillion a year, accounting for one of every \$5 the nation spends. This estimated increase is nearly three times the rate of inflation.
- And we know that the system could use resources more wisely and focus more on prevention. Luckily hospitals will always be there to help fill the gaps in coverage and access. In 2006 alone, Catholic hospitals provided more than \$5.7 billion in services identified as community benefit.
- These facts make discussions like this all the more urgent. We look forward to hearing everyone's perspective today on what values we should build from as we reform our system and achieve change.
- I'd now like to hand it over to [CATHOLIC HOSPITAL EXECUTIVE], from [HOSPITAL] to give a brief overview of CHA's vision for health care in the United States.



## Catholic Hospital Executive

- I'm pleased to be here with you today, both as a representative of [HOSPITAL] and as a member of the Catholic Health Association of the United States.
- As [MODERATOR] mentioned, there is a pressing need in our country for health care reform. The good news is that we have a real opportunity to inspire change.
- We must build upon our shared values to help create a system that works for everyone. Embracing a values-based approach will inspire us to look at the big picture and remind ourselves what it is we want to achieve through health reform.
- We must also encourage others to consider the values they think should guide health reform and to keep these values in mind as they examine proposed health reform policy and legislation.
- CHA has outlined a set of values-based criteria that articulates the Catholic health ministry's principles for health reform in "Our Vision for U.S. Health Care."
- While these criteria reflect values held by the Catholic faith, I think you'll find that they speak to shared ideals embraced by many faith traditions.
- Sometimes in our disagreements on specific policies, we become mired in details. Our hope is that embracing a values-based approach will inspire us to look at the big picture and remind ourselves what it is we want to achieve through health reform. More and more, people of all political persuasions are realizing that in order to achieve health reform, we must find solutions through consensus and compromise. We know this because over the past few decades, we've tried every other option! It is time for us to find common ground, and it's only natural that we begin this process by returning to our shared values.

- By convening lawmakers, local leaders, health care providers and others in discussions like this across the country, we will spark a serious and substantive dialogue about the best ways to achieve health reform while holding true to our priorities and beliefs.
- The core values that guide our principles are:
  - a. **Human Dignity** – We believe health care is essential to promoting and protecting the dignity of every individual.
  - b. **Concern for the Poor and Vulnerable** – The moral measure of a society is how it treats its poor and vulnerable, many of whom are marginalized by a lack of health coverage.
  - c. **Justice** – We believe health care is a human right and is necessary for individuals to participate fully in society.
  - d. **The Common Good** – Similar to education and employment, we feel that access to health care is an essential element for the common good of our society.
  - e. **Stewardship** – Health care resources should focus on the well-being of the community and promote public health.
  - f. **Pluralism** – Our health care system should encourage involvement of the public and private sectors and respect the religious and ethical values of patients and health care providers.
- At CHA and [HOSPITAL], we envision a health care system that promotes the health of the national community and respects the dignity of every person.

Specifically, we believe that health care in this country should be:

- a. **Available and Accessible to Everyone** – Every person should have comprehensive coverage and receive the same level and quality of care.
  - b. **Health and Prevention Oriented** – Health coverage must include preventive care, and we must also work to improve health literacy and education.
  - c. **Sufficiently and Fairly Financed** – The responsibility of financing should be shared among all stakeholders.
  - d. **Transparent and Consensus-Driven** – Cost growth should be managed to promote affordability and sustainability.
  - e. **Patient Centered** – Services should be coordinated and integrated throughout an individual’s lifetime, and the system should be accountable for health outcomes—at all stages of life.
  - f. **Safe, Effective and Designed to Deliver the Greatest Possible Quality** – The use of information technology should be standardized and expanded in order to improve the patient experience and reduce medical errors.
- We believe these principles are the building blocks of a health system that works for everyone. Discussing our values and how they relate to this critical issue not only reminds us of our commitment to better the health of our nation but—in a more practical manner—leads us one step closer to building consensus for positive and meaningful change.
  - Thank you.

## Health Care Provider

- As a [doctor/nurse/health care professional], I see the first-hand effects of a health care system that doesn't work for everyone.
- I treat uninsured patients who didn't visit a doctor when they should have and, as a result, find themselves in the emergency room.
- [INSERT PERSONAL STORY]
- I also treat insured patients who seek emergency care because they didn't get the preventive care they needed.
- While our health care system is full of talented doctors, nurses, surgeons and technicians, there are steps we can all take to prevent ever having to visit the hospital in the first place.
- Focusing on health and wellness and making preventive care a core part of health coverage benefits would both promote healthier living and cut costs.
- That means we all must do our part—whether it's adapting a healthy lifestyle, staying up to date with vaccinations and screenings, or taking time at events like this to make our voice heard and demand change.
- This issue affects all of us, and we all must become part of the change we want.

## Elected Official

- Health care affects all of us. Of course we want the best care for our families, friends and neighbors. But there's also something more. When we hear stories about people we've never met—such as a mother who contracts a serious illness and is forced to mortgage her family's house to pay for her medical treatment, or parents who struggle to afford asthma medication for their child—there's something within us that *knows* this is wrong.
- That's because deep down, we all share the belief that as a nation we should do better. And together, we can.
- The current health care system isn't working. When the uninsured don't seek basic preventive care, more serious and expensive conditions develop. When costs are so high that those with insurance can't pay their medical bills, we all pay for it. And when children go without health coverage or businesses can't afford to provide health insurance to their employees, we have a country with students unable to reach their potential and a nation whose productivity suffers.
- A reformed health care system will require input and compromise from all sides, and a serious and thoughtful discussion is the first step toward progress.
- Thank you for inviting me here today. I look forward to listening to and working with all parties as we build a health care system that works for everyone.



## **Business Leader**

- The challenges in health care today are being faced by many different sectors of our society. As the [CEO/PRESIDENT/LEADER] of [COMPANY] here in [CITY], one of the biggest challenges I face is the high cost of providing health coverage for my employees.
- And I'm not alone. I know the tough decision business leaders sometimes face between providing coverage for their employees and staying afloat as a company. Health insurance premiums are not only rising for individuals, they've become one of the largest percentages of costs for businesses as well.
- Companies work hard to provide health coverage to their employees, not only because it is the right thing to do but because healthier employees are good for business. Companies that provide health insurance are able to attract qualified employees and can better retain those employees over time, helping to strengthen their company and retain their competitive edge.
- I'm encouraged that we have joined together today to have this urgent and timely discussion. We must reform the health system so that it works for employees and employers alike. It's a task too great for any one organization, company or government agency to tackle. But by sharing our opinions and perspectives, I'm hopeful that we'll come closer to the day when all employers are able to provide their employees with quality, comprehensive health coverage.

## Health Advocate

- The time for health reform is now. We have no choice but to repair a system that leaves too many people out, that could spend resources more wisely and that could be the best anywhere—as long as we put our collective minds and talents to the task.
- It is an outrage that while the United States spends more per person on health care than any other industrialized nation, there are still 47 million uninsured people in this country. And what’s even more alarming is that more than 9 million of them are children.
- Here in [CITY/STATE], we aim to change that. In addition to important discussions like the one we’re having today, we’re also [INSERT DETAILS OF LOCAL OR STATEWIDE REFORM EFFORTS]
- In November, our country will elect a new leader. There will be many new faces in Congress as well. Discussions like the one we’re having today send a clear message to our nation’s leaders that we’re committed to working together locally to build a health care system that works for everyone and we will hold them accountable to work just as hard to provide leadership at the state and national levels.

### **Mission Leader, Chaplain, Bishop or Other Faith Leader**

- I'm here today as the [MISSION LEADER/CHAPLAIN/BISHOP] of [HOSPITAL/CHURCH] and on behalf of the many faith traditions that have a long history and shared commitment of caring for people in need.
- One of the biggest injustices facing our country today is the staggering number of individuals who lack basic health care coverage. In a nation as blessed and advanced as ours, surely this is a problem that can be solved.
- As people of faith, we have a moral obligation to ensure our health system serves everyone justly and with compassion.
- It's time we viewed health care as a basic human right. Regardless of a person's place in society, all lives are sacred and everyone deserves to be treated with dignity.
- By taking small, manageable steps to improve the well-being of our family, friends, neighbors and community members, we are also doing our part to improve the health of all of our brothers and sisters in the broader, national community.

## Uninsured Spokesperson

- My name is [NAME]. I'm from [CITY, STATE] and I'm here today to share my story of being uninsured.
- The importance of health coverage first hit home for me when [INSERT PERSONAL STORY]
- There are 47 million stories like mine. Stories of people who get sick or injured and don't seek care when they need to. People who are forced to choose between buying groceries and taking their kid to the doctor. Millions of people who live sicker and die younger.
- I hope that you will remember my story as you hold this discussion today. I hope my experience and that of many others will inspire you to join the effort to create a health care system that works for everyone.

# Moderator Q&A Guide

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ENCOURAGE DYNAMIC DIALOGUE

The roundtable discussion should center on the values that unite us in health reform. An easy way to keep your discussion on track is to organize questions by the principles outlined in “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care.” Below are sample questions that pertain to each principle. You may want to consider kicking off the discussion with a general question about values:

- What values do you think are most important to uphold while reforming our nation’s health care system?

Principle #1: *Health care in the United States should be **available and accessible to everyone**, paying special attention to the poor and vulnerable.*

Suggested Questions:

- There is much debate among presidential candidates and in states about the need to enact a mandate for individuals to secure health coverage. What are your feelings about a mandate and do you think it’s possible to achieve universal health coverage without one?
- According to an annual survey of employers by the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation, the percentage of all employers offering health insurance in the past eight years peaked in 2000 at 69 percent and has fallen steadily since, hitting 60 percent in 2007. If employers cannot sustain their role as the primary provider of insurance in America, what group is most suited to replace them? The government? The individual?

Principle #2: *Health care in the United States should be **health and prevention oriented**, with the goal of enhancing the health status of communities.*

Suggested Questions:

- Chronic diseases such as diabetes, emphysema, high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke are the cause of more than 60 percent of deaths and account for more than 70 percent of the nation’s health care budget. Do you see this as a matter of personal responsibility, or does the burden lie with the government to implement programs?
- Do you think individuals who incorporate health and prevention into their lifestyle should be offered discounts through their health insurance provider? What other incentives could be offered to individuals and/or health care providers to focus on prevention?



Principle #3: *Health care in the United States should be **sufficiently and fairly financed**.*

Suggested Questions:

- How can we make the conversation about financing a productive and honest one that doesn't get immediately bogged down in controversial details?
- Do you agree that the responsibility for financing should be shared among all affected people / organizations? Should employers not offering coverage be forced to pay into health reform initiatives?

Principle #4: *Health care in the United States should be **transparent and consensus driven** in allocation of resources and organized for cost-effective care and administration.*

Suggested Questions:

- What do you see as the primary goal of health reform? In your opinion, what can each person on this panel do to move the nation closer to achieving this goal?
- It's been said that health reform will only come about as a result of consensus-building and compromise. What compromise is each of you willing to make to promote agreement on health reform in this country?

Principle #5: *Health care in the United States should be **patient centered** and designed to address health needs at all stages of life, from conception to natural death.*

Sample Questions:

- What are some steps we can take to better coordinate care among the patient, families and health care providers?
- What can we do to make sure patients are actively involved in their own care and wellness?

Principle #6: *Health care in the United States should be **safe, effective and designed to deliver the greatest possible quality**.*

Suggested Questions:

- According to a recent *New York Times* article, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg considers a lack of disease prevention a more urgent problem than lack of access to health care or skyrocketing health care costs. Recently, New York City spent more than \$60 million on computer software to track patients' medical records in order to provide better preventive care. Would you agree with Mayor Bloomberg's viewpoint? Should the nation focus its energy on tackling one of these problems before another?

- Using the best, most current research to make decisions about patient care is ideal. But how do we implement a system using evidence-based research when different studies offer conflicting results? How does a health care system keep up with the latest research?

## Looking Ahead

Roundtable discussions are an excellent way to spark a dialogue in your community on ways to improve health and health care in the United States. However, discussions alone cannot bring about the improvements we need. Coming together and discussing ways to achieve health reform is the first step toward change.

After your roundtable discussion, reach out to speakers, attendees, local organizations and other community members to gauge interest in subsequent meetings. In addition, encourage others to visit [www.chausa.org](http://www.chausa.org) for more information on “Our Vision for U.S. Health Care” and to complete the CHA health reform study tool to help organize thoughts on health reform proposals.

To share the success of your roundtable discussion or ideas on how to continue the discussion, contact Phil Hinz at 314-253-3484, or [phinz@chausa.org](mailto:phinz@chausa.org).

Continuing the dialogue is essential to achieving health reform. Whether you are able to organize future events or simply encourage discussion among individuals, maintaining a dialogue of diverse views on the issue will help raise the visibility of the issue, encourage collaboration and lay the groundwork for real reform. And basing that dialogue on the core values that should guide health policy will help us focus on the ultimate goal of a health care system that works for everyone.

This guide is made available by:

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Through the Covering a Nation initiative, CHA works with Catholic health care providers and local and national partners to create the momentum for real, sustainable change in our health care delivery and financing systems.

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