Health Equity & the Rollback of U.S. Affordable Care Act

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Institute for Policy Studies
Program on Inequality

• Partner with grassroots and policy organizations
• Publicize research and analysis: Inequality.org
• Elevate stories of activists
• Conduct in-depth original research
• Disrupt the narratives that perpetuate inequality
Health Equity: A Definition

Everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, and health care.
Measuring Health Equity

reducing and ultimately eliminating disparities in health and its determinants that adversely affect excluded or marginalized groups.
U.S. Stumbling Toward Universal Health Care
A Long Road

• 1965 Medicare and Medicaid
  – **Medicare** is universal for those over 65 or with disabilities
  – **Medicaid** is for low income households, jointly implemented with states

• 1993 Pres. Bill Clinton attempt
Uninsured Rate and Number of Uninsured: 1987 to 2012

Numbers in millions

- Number of uninsured
- Recession

1987: 31.0 million
2012: 48.0 million

Percent

- Uninsured rate

1987: 12.9%
2012: 15.4%

Note: The data for 1999 reflect the results of follow-up verification questions, creating a break in the historical series.
Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare")
Passed October 2009 Implemented 2012
Key Provisions of Affordable Care Act

• **Protections**: Cover pre-existing conditions at affordable rates
• Young adults remain on parent’s plans until 26
• **Mandate** – penalty for not having insurance
• **Expansion of Medicaid** at state levels
• **Subsidies** for care paid for by 3 taxes, including tax on medical equipment, surcharge on high incomes.
Forward movement under “Obamacare”

• In 4 years - expanded coverage by additional 17 million people
• 29 million remain uninsured – more underinsured
• Health equity – Beginning to make a difference
• 31 states and District of Columbia adopt ACA Medicaid funds, expanding coverage
States Adopting ACA Medicare

- Adopted (32 States including DC)
- Not Adopting At This Time (19 States)
Health Equity Example: African-American families

• Under ACA, between 2013 and 2016, the uninsured rate for nonelderly African Americans declined from 18.9 percent to 11.7 percent.
• White uninsured rate is 7.5 percent
• African Americans make up 13.3 percent of U.S. population but 19 percent of Medicaid enrollees
• Repeal of ACA and cutting Medicaid would risk this progress.
Backlash against Affordable Care Act
“A government takeover of health care system”

The House has voted 54 times in four years on Obamacare. Here’s the full list.

By Ed O’Keefe  March 21, 2014  Email

Sunday marks the fourth anniversary of the signing of the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, however you prefer to describe it. (But Nancy Pelosi clearly prefers the former.)

While Democrats are struggling with whether to embrace the law or push for changes, Republicans are reminding voters that since they took control of the House in 2011, they’ve voted 54 times to undo, revamp or tweak the law. Here’s a full list of those votes, as provided by GOP aides. Dates with an asterisk denote a bill that also passed the Senate and was signed by President Obama:
American Health Care Act
“Trumpcare”

• Phases Out ACA’s Medicaid expansion
• Caps federal payments to states for Medicaid
• Elimination of ACA “mandate penalties” with surcharge on people who fail to maintain coverage.
• Other provisions that shift costs/risks to consumer
• Repeal of taxes to pay for ACA provisions
House Plan: 23 Million Uninsured by 2026

House GOP Plan Means Millions More Uninsured

Increase in uninsured compared to current law

- 2020: 19 mil.
- 2026: 23 mil.
Repeal of ACA is Driven by Tax Cut Agenda
Scenario A: Political Gridlock
States won by Donald Trump
Many Red States with Medicaid Expansion:
Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Louisiana

Current Status of State Medicaid Expansion Decisions

NOTES: Current status for each state is based on KCMU tracking and analysis of state executive activity. *AR, AZ, IA, IN, MI, MT, and NH have approved Section 1115 waivers. WI covers adults up to 100% FPL in Medicaid, but did not adopt the ACA expansion. SOURCE: “Status of State Action on the Medicaid Expansion Decision,” KFF State Health Facts, updated January 1, 2017. http://kff.org/health-reform/state-indicator/state-activity-around-expanding-medicaid-under-the-affordable-care-act/
Confusion over ACA vs. Obamacare

"I don't have Obamacare. I'm insured through the Affordable Care Act."

One-Third Don’t Know Obamacare and Affordable Care Act Are the Same
Trump Vote in Michigan
Michigan: 1 in 10 depend on ACA, Mostly in Counties that Supported Trump
Scenario B: Reversal-Rise in Health Disparities
Future Trend: Polarization of States: Health Equity vs. Disparity
California “Single payer” Proposal passes in May 2017
Pressure Builds for “Medicare for All”
Sander’s Proposal – Paid for by Progressive Revenue provisions
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