

## Federal Health Care Policy Priorities for Public Sector Purchasers | 118<sup>th</sup> Congress

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### Who We Are

The Public Sector HealthCare Roundtable is a non-partisan, member-directed coalition that exists to give public sector health care purchasers and State and local health plan administrators a voice in the design, development, and implementation of national health care policies. The Roundtable does this by providing in-depth policy analysis and monitoring, education on issues relevant to public sector purchasers, and a forum to collectively engage with key decision-makers in Washington, D.C.

### What We Believe

The members of the Public Sector HealthCare Roundtable have a long-term commitment to maintaining programs that enable public workers, retirees, and their families to obtain high-quality health coverage at a cost that is affordable and sustainable for the workers, their families, and their employers. It is our belief that national health care policies should advance innovative proposals to constrain costs, increase value, and improve quality and efficiency in the health care delivery system.

## Our Federal Policy Priorities

### Health Care Coverage and Cost Containment

- We support the ability of all Americans to obtain high-quality health coverage at a cost that is affordable and sustainable for the workers, their families, and their employers.
- We support the preservation of – and improvements to – the Affordable Care Act, such as the permanent extension of expanded individual market premium tax credits in the American Rescue Plan.
- We support policies that constrain health care cost growth to ensure the long-term solvency of public programs, including the movement to innovative payment models based on value and quality, including Medicare Advantage.
- We support policies to lower the Medicare eligibility age to 60 to ensure access to care and lower costs for older Americans, while avoiding cost shifting to the private system.
- We support policies to expand original Medicare benefits to include dental and vision care.



- We support efforts to expand access to telehealth services by permanently removing geographic restrictions for Medicare beneficiaries and allowing more types of health care providers to furnish telehealth services, thereby reducing inequities in patient access and eliminating barriers to treatment.
- We support federal health policies that aggressively target waste, fraud, and abuse, recognizing that up to one-third of spending in the U.S. is on administrative, operational, or clinical waste rather than evidence-based health care.

- We support policies that expand the capacity and diversity of the health care workforce, especially in shortage areas, to increase patient access and ensure the sustainability of the health care system.



### **Pharmaceutical Access, Costs, and Treatment**

- We support legislative and regulatory efforts to establish and sustain greater competition in the pharmaceutical – and especially the biopharmaceutical – marketplace, and the movement to value-based payment for prescriptions – including an expanded role for comparative effectiveness research to guide public and private drug pricing negotiations – to address exorbitant original list prices set by brand manufacturers.
- We support ongoing efforts that seek to align the pace of approval with the pace of discovery of safe, innovative, and cost-effective pharmaceutical products; equally important, we support efforts to ensure that public sector workers, retirees, and their families have robust access to these innovative therapies.
- We support providing FDA with the resources necessary to quickly bring safe and effective generic drugs to market and to end the backlog of generic applications, particularly as it relates to classes of drugs with limited or no generic competition.
- We support building upon the Inflation Reduction Act to accelerate and expand the authority of Medicare to negotiate directly with pharmaceutical manufacturers for high-cost drugs and to extend those prices to the employer market.
- We support market-based policies to end anti-competitive arrangements between brand and generic pharmaceutical companies that limit access to affordable medications for all Americans.

- We support policies that require drug makers to publish the indirect and direct research and development costs, as well as show the original list price of brand drugs in direct-to-consumer advertising to help consumers make informed decisions.
- We support policies that address the opioid epidemic in the U.S., including increased NIH funding and flexibility, increased access to behavioral health and recovery centers via SAMHSA, greater data sharing capabilities between states and federal agencies such as the CDC, and enhanced training for first responders.



### **Provider Consolidation and Prices**

- We support policies aimed at preventing provider consolidation that decreases competition and leads to unsustainable increases in unit prices, increasing the burden on patients, taxpayers, and the health care system.
- We support policies that promote competition in the provider market, including enforcement of antitrust regulations, to support cost containment, improve the quality of care, and encourage innovation.

### **Health Care Quality and Improved Outcomes**

- We support the further development of evidence-based quality measures, and particularly those in high-impact areas such as the complex chronically ill and those individuals that are functionally limited.
- We support policies that establish and disseminate comparative effectiveness research in order to identify the most appropriate treatments at the lowest cost that will achieve the highest-quality outcomes for patients, including the reauthorization of the Patient

Centered Outcome Research Institute (PCORI) to allow for comparison of cost data.

- We support the continued implementation of the Prevention and Public Health Fund which will focus on prevention research and health screenings, educational outreach, and immunization programs.
- We support policies that will ensure higher-quality care for those facing advanced illness and nearing the end-of-life, including the expansion of promising value-based reimbursement models that rely on palliative care in the Medicare program.

### **Mental and Behavioral Health**

- We support policies that address the ongoing opioid epidemic by expanding community access to high-quality, evidence-based care; strengthen the recovery services workforce; and engage employers to address the workforce-related impacts.
- We support policies that advance equitable access to mental health care and reduce utilization and costs by increasing coverage for mental health and substance use preventative services, improving the parity of mental health services, and expanding access to community-based mental health services.



### **Innovation in Care Delivery**

- We support public programs that facilitate the shift to value-based care, such as the continuation of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) to test and evaluate innovative delivery system models (including accountable care organizations, bundling arrangements, competitive bidding, etc.). We support the rapid expansion of such models that demonstrate value.



- We support the development and implementation of innovative value-based benefit designs that incentivize the use of high-value health care services and medications, and disincentivize the use of services that are rated “D” for specific populations by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.
- We support the expanded role of home and community-based services to deliver care to people with disabilities, including state Medicaid buy-in programs for workers with disabilities.
- We support federal policies that seek to provide financial and caregiver support for those with long-term care needs, such as those in need of assistance with activities of daily living, including the development of a federal catastrophic long-term care insurance program that would help create a viable private market for long-term care insurance.
- We support the advancement of innovative care delivery models that allow those with complex needs and those individuals nearing the end of life to receive care in the home setting.

### **A Note about this Policy**

*The Roundtable Board of Directors reviews and updates the Federal Health Care Policy Priorities for Public Sector Purchasers at the beginning of each Congress. The policies are designed to guide the Roundtable’s engagement and advocacy agenda throughout the two years of each Congress.*

*Any questions or comments regarding these policies may be directed to the Roundtable via [info@healthcareroundtable.us](mailto:info@healthcareroundtable.us).*



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