

## Health Care For All New York

For Immediate Release: January 5th, 2012  
Contact: Charlie Albanetti, [518.595.9047](tel:518.595.9047)

### **New Reports Detail How New Yorkers Have Already Benefited and Will Benefit from Health Care Reform**

#### ***Coalition Calls on State to Complete Health Care Reform by Creating Exchange***

**Albany, NY** - Members of Health Care For All New York (HCFANY) today released two new reports highlighting the impact of federal health care reform on New Yorkers and called on Governor Cuomo and the Legislature to create the health insurance exchange. HCFANY applauded Governor Cuomo for including passing a health insurance exchange as a priority in yesterday's State of the State address.

"Relief can't come quickly enough for the nearly 3 million uninsured New Yorkers, including the 10 percent of New York cancer patients uninsured at the time of diagnosis, who will benefit from the creation of a health insurance exchange," said **Sherry Tomasky, Legislative Campaign Director, American Cancer Society of NY & NJ**. "Gov. Cuomo's commitment to development of the exchange, as detailed in yesterday's State of the State package, provides much encouragement and we are optimistic that a quality, affordable, easily accessible exchange governed by a board free of conflicts of interest is within reach. As evidenced by the reports presented today, the Affordable Care Act works and we must continue to ensure its smooth implementation."

A new report by the Public Policy and Education Fund of New York, *The Affordable Care Act and New Yorkers: A Gift That Keeps On Giving*, highlighted the benefits that New Yorkers have already gained since passage of the 2010 law, including the following:

- 2.6 million New Yorkers did not have to pay co-payments or deductibles for preventive services due to a ban on such charges in the ACA.
- 252,300 New York seniors and people with disabilities in the Medicare "doughnut hole" received \$250 rebate checks to help with prescription drug costs and will continue receive help in the future.
- 4 out of 5 small businesses are eligible for a small business tax credit to help them buy health insurance for their employees.
- Millions of New Yorkers have already seen benefits from the prohibition on "lifetime" limits in insurance policies.

"Our report documents that the Affordable Care Act is already helping millions of New Yorkers, - from children to seniors -- and that New Yorkers will be dramatically better off if New York passes legislation to set up a health insurance exchange," said **Bob Cohen, Policy Director of the Public Policy and Education Fund (PPEF) and the report author**. "In 2014, between 800,000 to 1.2 million New Yorkers will become insured, and the exchange will provide an easy means for New Yorkers and small businesses to select quality health care plans that meet their needs and budgets."

-continued-

The report details how New Yorkers will benefit once a health insurance exchange is created. Small businesses would see even further cost savings and be given access to quality plans at a lower price for their employees. By 2019, the average New York household will see an annual savings of \$1,161, and even more for households with lower incomes.

Community Service Society of New York, with funding from the New York State Health Foundation, also released a new publication, *Health Reform Works: How Affordable Care Act is Already Making a Difference for New Yorkers*, that chronicles the personal stories of families, small business entrepreneurs, senior citizens, and students across New York who are already reaping benefits from Affordable Care Act. Before the law was put in place, working families were being crushed with ever-rising premiums while their incomes remained static.

“Making the case for reforms to our health insurance system, either under the direction of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or as a result of the kind of grass-roots, independent advocacy exemplified by Health Care for All New York, are producing positive outcomes for New Yorkers struggling with health care costs,” said **David R. Jones, President and CEO of the Community Service Society**. “A handful of personal accounts by some New Yorkers who have benefitted from ACA are published in *Health Reform Works: How the Affordable Care Act is Already Making a Difference for New Yorkers*. While these New Yorkers had an opportunity to tell their stories, thousands more will not. Let us keep that in mind as we continue to fight to expand quality and affordable health coverage to more New Yorkers.”

“Health reform is already making a real difference in the lives of New Yorkers,” said **James R. Knickman, President and CEO of the New York State Health Foundation**. “The personal stories of people across the state—those with pre-existing health conditions who now have affordable health care coverage; young people who can now stay on their parents’ plans until age 26; small businesses that can now provide coverage for their employees, and seniors who now pay less out of their pockets for prescriptions—illustrate some of the early success of health reform implementation. If we continue to implement the law effectively, the ACA will represent the largest insurance coverage expansion since the enactment of Medicare in 1965.”

In the 2011 legislative session, the Governor and legislative leaders agreed on legislation to create a health insurance exchange as a public authority (A.8514/S.5849). The Assembly passed the bill, but the Senate did not act before the end of session. HCFANY is advocating that both houses of the legislature pass exchange legislation this session to avoid the establishment of a federally-operating exchange in New York that is less likely to take into account the unique needs of New Yorkers.

"The Children's Defense Fund-New York supports the interests of children, youth, and families in obtaining affordable, comprehensive health coverage. Currently, New York State needs to ensure that more than 200,000 uninsured children acquire necessary coverage," said **Reverend Dr. Emma Jordan Simpson, Executive Director, Children's Defense Fund-NY**. "We implore our Governor and Legislature to act immediately in support of Exchange Legislation for the benefit of families in New York."