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Policy Guides



An Advocate's Guide to the Private Health Insurance Market

By Robert Seifert and Nancy Turnbull

Many issues of health care access are intertwined with issues of health insurance. It is commonly accepted, for example, that extending insurance coverage will improve access to care. But just what is "health insurance," and why has it become central to the financing of health care in the U.S.? What are the features of health insurance markets, and what are these markets good and not good at achieving? The goal of this guide is to supply information with which groups working to improve access might intelligently consider engaging the insurance market as a strategic option.

\$ 7.00 ♦ 55 pages ♦ 2001



Community Benefits: An Opportunity for Action and Healthcare Change

by Natalie Seto and Bess Karger Weiskopf, *Community Catalyst*

This manual is designed to assist healthcare advocates in developing a community benefits effort. It explains the concept of community benefits—resources from a health provider to meet community-identified health needs and concerns—and suggests many organizing techniques and strategies. The manual is extremely interactive with many group exercises and examples from throughout the country.

\$15.00 ♦ 133 pages ♦ 2000



A Community Leader's Guide to Hospital Finance: Evaluating How a Hospital Gets and Spends Its Money

By Sarah Gunther Lane, MS, Elizabeth Longstreth, BA, and Victoria Nixon, LCSW, MS

Community members need to have a basic understanding of hospital finance to evaluate a hospital's charitable commitment to the health of their community. This guide provides basic tools that can be used to make this evaluation as well as some tips on how to engage hospital leadership in meaningful discussion of hospital financial performance

\$7.00 ♦ 45 pages ♦ 2001



Healthcare Policy: The Basics

by John E. McDonough

This primer sets the context for access improvement work by drawing the "big picture" of the American healthcare system and health policy. McDonough gives an overview of the national healthcare system in terms of access, cost and quality—who gets care, how good is it, what we spend on it as a country. He also describes past efforts at health reform and current issues facing reformers, particularly those that concern to coverage and care for the uninsured.

\$7.00 ♦ 63 pages ♦ 1999



La Política del Cuidado de la Salud en los Estados Unidos (Spanish translation of Health Care Policy: The Basics)

\$7.00 ♦ 70 pages ♦ 1999

Immigrant Access to Health Benefits

Prepared by Claudia Schlosberg, National Health Law Program

This manual was written for use as a resource in conjunction with an intensive training program developed by The Access Project and the National Health Law Program. It is essentially a primer on health access for immigrants. It details and explains basic eligibility requirements for key federal and state programs, and identifies issues that can be significant barriers to access for immigrants and their families.

****AVAILABLE ONLY ON OUR WEBSITE: WWW.ACCESSPROJECT.ORG****

Untangling DSH: A Guide for Community Groups to Using the Medicaid DSH Program to Promote Access to Care

by Jocelyn Guyer, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Andy Schneider & Michael O. Spivey, Health Policy Group

If you are looking for resources to increase access to healthcare services in your state, you may want to learn more about Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) funds. DSH was created as part of the Medicaid program to compensate hospitals for the added costs of serving a disproportionate share of low-income individuals who either are part of the Medicaid program or have no insurance at all. DSH is a very large funding source—\$9 billion in 2000—yet the distribution and use of these funds are not widely understood. This manual helps to "untangle" DSH.

\$7.00 ◆ 77 pages ◆ 2000

Organizing Guides

Developing a Community-Based Response to Healthcare Issues: A Framework for Planning and Action

Prepared for The Access Project by Community Catalyst

This framework provides specific steps your group can take to effectively address healthcare issues. The ideas offered are flexible enough to be used by any group, from an established organization to a start-up group. The framework will help you build community participation by offering ways to reach-out to new community groups and individuals and involve them in healthcare action.

\$7.00 ◆ 42 pages ◆ 2000

Getting the Lay of the Land on Health: A Guide for Using Interviews to Gather Information

by Susan T. Sherry and Aimee Marlow

This guide is designed to help staff of community groups to assess the potential usefulness of using interviews of key members of the community to find out information about healthcare issues, the healthcare system, or about community organizations themselves. It is also a guide to conducting and using the results of these "key informant" interviews. Case examples are included throughout the guide.

\$3.00 ◆ 17 pages ◆ 1999

Real Clout

by Judith C. Meredith and Catherine M. Dunham

Real Clout is a manual for community-based activists who are trying to improve healthcare access by influencing public policy. Responsibility for many aspects of health policy has lately shifted from the federal government to states. This presents an opportunity for community activists to encourage state policy-makers to promote policies that expand access. Real Clout is a "how to" guide for activists who want to seize that opportunity but lack the relevant experience.

\$15.00 ◆ 218 pages ◆ 1999

Data Guides

Using Data: A Guide for Community Health Activists

An introduction to getting and using data for the data-shy, this guide discusses the value of using quantitative and qualitative data to score points with healthcare providers, funders and the media. It suggests where to go to get data, and describes some simple ways to present it.

\$3.00 ◆ 20 pages ◆ 1999

A Selection of Essential Data Sources

A compilation of some of the best sources of healthcare data available on the World Wide Web and through various public and private groups and where to find them.

\$7.00 ◆ 60 pages ◆ Updated 2000



How Many Uninsured? A Resource Guide for Community-Level Estimates

By Elinor Sochowitzky and Nancy Turnbull for The Access Project

Information on the number of uninsured in a community is spotty at best, and often non-existent. This guide describes methods for using available data to construct estimates, and low, medium, and high cost options for collecting your own data.

\$7.00 ◆ 67 pages ◆ 1999

National Reports



Action Where it Counts: Communities Responding to the Challenge of Health Care for the Uninsured

by The Access Project

Describes the results of a national survey conducted by The Access Project. Attempts to identify, quantify, and categorize local efforts in providing healthcare to better understand who is doing what to promote healthcare access in various parts of the country.

\$3.00 ◆ 21 pages ◆ 1999

Community Reports



Health Care Access for Immigrants and Refugees (specific to Illinois)

Prepared for The Access Project by the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

This guide was created for Illinois health outreach workers and immigrant advocates to help them understand immigrants' eligibility for health care and the barriers that exist to enrolling immigrant families in health programs.

◆ Available Summer 2001 ◆



Health Care Access for Immigrants and Refugees (specific to Massachusetts)

Prepared for The Access Project by Tyler Moran, Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition

This guide was created for Massachusetts health outreach workers and immigrant advocates to help them understand immigrants' eligibility for health care and the barriers that exist to enrolling immigrant families in health programs.

\$7.00 ◆ 51 pages ◆ 2000



Health Care Access for Immigrants and Refugees (specific to New Jersey)

Prepared for The Access Project by the New Jersey Immigration Policy Network

This guide was created for New Jersey health outreach workers and immigrant advocates to help them understand immigrants' eligibility for health care and the barriers that exist to enrolling immigrant families in health programs.

◆ Available Summer 2001 ◆



A Healthcare Safety Net in Tatters: Hospital Free Care in the District of Columbia

Written for The Access Project by Community Catalyst and Health Care Now

This report is the result of Health Care Now's efforts to learn more about free care policies at District of Columbia acute care hospitals and how easy it would be for an uninsured person to obtain free care at one of these facilities. The report presents Health Care Now's findings and recommendations.

\$3.00 ◆ 16 pages ◆ 2000



Lives At Risk: Nearly Half Million Without Health Insurance in Miami-Dade County

by Carol Pryor, The Access Project

Using comprehensive data provided by the Florida Health Insurance Study along with other sources, this report was designed to develop a picture of the uninsured in Miami-Dade County—who they are and how local policies affect the availability of care for the uninsured.

\$3.00 ◆ 41 pages ◆ 2000



The Marion and Polk Counties Health Access Monitoring Project: A Report on Health Access for the Underserved Populations of Marion and Polk Counties

This report was done in collaboration with the Oregon Health Action Campaign. The report represents OHAC's recommendations to improve health access in Marion and Polk counties by broadening and deepening community involvement in healthcare advocacy.

\$3.00 ◆ 14 pages ◆ 2000



Profile of the Uninsured in Texas

By Robert Seifert, The Access Project

Texas has one of the highest uninsured rates in the country; more than one-tenth of the nation's uninsured live in Texas. This report describes the characteristics of the uninsured in Texas comparing some of the key characteristics with national data. The report then looks at where the important gaps in coverage are and recent Texas policies to address the problem.

\$3.00 ♦ 23 pages ♦ 2000



Providing Health Care to the Uninsured in Texas: A Guide for County Officials

by Caton Fenz for The Access Project

This comprehensive guide provides, in detail, a description of the health care system for the uninsured in Texas. It includes an outline of the types of health insurance people have in Texas, and a description of the Texas uninsured in comparison to the general population. It outlines the many pieces of the Texas health care system for the uninsured, with a special focus on the role of counties, and explains how all of the health care system for the uninsured gets paid for.

\$7.00 ♦ 72 pages ♦ 2000



Reducing the Number Of Uninsured People in Illinois: Models for Action

by Brian Rosman, Lisa Cacari Stone, and Robert W. Seifert

Also produced to support the work of United Power for Action and Justice, it discusses trends within the state that impact this group and some policy changes that may be options.

\$3.00 ♦ 9 pages ♦ 2000



The Uninsured in Illinois and Chicago: Close to 2 Million Face Barriers to Health Care

by Robert W. Seifert and Kara Sokol

Produced to support the work of United Power for Action and Justice, it describes the growing number of people without health insurance in Illinois and the consequences associated with this situation.

\$3.00 ♦ 19 pages ♦ 1999

Case Studies



Boston Health Access Project of Health Care for All

By Anne Standley, The Access Project, Nicholas Herold, and Marcia Hams, Health Care for All

This case study describes an initiative of a consumer advocacy organization in Boston aimed at empowering low-income Boston residents in their dealings with the city's teaching hospitals.

\$3.00 ♦ 36 pages ♦ 2000



Ecu-Health Care: An Ecumenically Sponsored Medical Program in North Adams, Massachusetts

By Anne Standley, The Access Project and Jeffrey Prottas, Brandeis University

Private citizens helping members of their community: Educating public agencies and combating the stigma associated with public health insurance programs.

\$3.00 ♦ 14 pages ♦ 1999