



**Primary Care Coalition Recommendations
to the Governor's Medicaid Redesign Team
January 13, 2011**

***Primary Care Expansion Is Crucial to Medicaid Cost
Reductions and Federal Health Reform Funding***

New York can save billions of dollars by transforming its health care system into one that values outcomes and puts patients first. This is only possible if New York invests in robust, patient-centered primary care that reduces the need for more expensive interventions, particularly for patients with multiple chronic illnesses. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) can provide significant resources to help New York make these investments – including a 90% federal match in some cases. New York must enact policies to take full advantage of this funding.

Designate primary care expansion as an Administration priority, and create a Primary Care Office at the Department of Health. Primary care expansion should be considered a major Administration priority for achieving cost savings, with authority situated in the office of the Deputy Secretary for Health, Medicaid and Oversight. This designee would work with key stakeholders and oversee the implementation of all policies impacting primary care, including maximizing the use of ACA funds for primary care expansion. Additionally, a State Office of Primary Care should be created to provide a single point of contact and coordination within the Health Department to assist providers and facilitate expansion.

Enact legislation to expand Patient-Centered Medical Homes (PCMH). There are currently nine PCMH demonstrations in New York, as well as a Medicaid PCMH incentive program. New York needs to enact legislation that provides the financial incentives, regulatory framework and technical assistance that will facilitate large-scale PCMH expansion and effectively use ACA funds.

Use remaining HEAL funds to leverage private sector capital and build primary care infrastructure. Development of New York's primary care infrastructure must be accelerated, but lack of access to credit still hampers the ability of providers to expand and renovate. Wherever possible, remaining HEAL funds should be used as an ongoing financing source that can leverage private sector capital to expand primary care infrastructure.

Make available technical assistance for PCMH implementation. Becoming a true medical home will require difficult changes in how most providers operate, yet those changes are critical to coordinating care and

lowering costs. Technical assistance will help providers adopt and sustain these changes and expedite implementation of PCMH.

Rapidly train and deploy primary care providers to underserved communities. The ACA will bring New York's Medicaid primary care reimbursement to at least Medicare levels in 2013 and 2014. It also provides significant funding for scholarships, loan repayments and training programs. Taking advantage of this federal funding requires New York to rapidly recruit or grow a primary care provider corps that can provide comprehensive primary care services to its Medicaid population.

Make changes to redesign the health care system as a whole – not just Medicaid. As the State's largest payer, Medicaid has the ability to drive change in the health care system as a whole. The State should utilize the Medicaid redesign opportunity to align all payers around the principles of the redesign, especially in support of primary care and PCMH.

Key Primary Care Provisions in the Affordable Care Act

The following ACA provisions could bring substantial funds to New York to expand primary care and redesign its health system:

- Medicaid reimbursement for primary care increased to at least Medicare levels, 2013–2014
- Medicaid patient-centered medical home pilots
- Grants/contracts to support medical homes through: Community Health Teams, Community-based collaborative care networks for low-income populations, Primary Care Extension Centers to provide technical assistance to primary care providers
- Scholarships, loan repayment, and training demonstration programs to invest in primary care physicians, midlevel providers, and community providers
- \$11 billion for Federally Qualified Health Centers nationwide between 2011–2015, to serve 15 million to 20 million more patients by 2015

About the Primary Care Coalition

Founded in 2006, the Primary Care Coalition's mission is to expand quality primary care in New York State. It is currently comprised of the Community Health Care Association of New York State; the Primary Care Development Corporation; the New York State Area Health Education Center System; the American College of Physicians, New York Chapter; and the New York State Academy of Family Physicians.

For more information or to join the Primary Care Coalition, please visit www.nyprimarycarehome.org or contact Dan Lowenstein, 212-437-3942, dlowenstein@pcdcny.org