



BARACK OBAMA'S PLAN FOR A HEALTHY AMERICA

Lowering health care costs and ensuring affordable, high-quality health care for all

Millions of Americans are uninsured or underinsured because of rising medical costs. 250,000 Iowans, including nearly 5% of Iowa's children lack health insurance. The vast majority of uninsured Iowans are part of working families. Today, only 37% of Iowa small businesses can afford to offer their employees health insurance.

Health care costs are skyrocketing: Iowans spend over \$15 billion per year on health care, which accounts for nearly 14% of the state economy. And health insurance premiums in Iowa are increasing at an unacceptable pace – almost 4 times faster than wages over the past 6 years. Lack of affordable health care is compounded by serious flaws in our health care delivery system. About 100,000 Americans die from medical errors in hospitals every year.

Too little is spent on prevention and public health. Iowa faces a crisis of obesity and chronic diseases with statewide obesity and hypertension rates standing around 23% and 25%, respectively. Yet despite this less than 4 cents of every health care dollar is spent on prevention and public health.

Obama's plan will provide affordable, comprehensive and portable health coverage to the 250,000 Iowans currently without health insurance by:

- Making available a new national health program that will allow individuals and small businesses to buy affordable health care similar to that available to federal employees. No one will be turned away or charged more due to illness, and everyone who needs it will receive a subsidy for their premiums.
- Making available a National Health Insurance Exchange to reform the private insurance market. Any American could enroll in participating private plans, which would have to provide comprehensive benefits, issue every applicant a policy, and charge fair and stable premiums.
- Ensuring all 34,000 uninsured children in Iowa have affordable, high-quality health care coverage
- Expanding Medicaid and SCHIP and ensuring they continue to serve their critical safety net function.
- Requiring employers to make a meaningful contribution to the health coverage of their employees.

Obama's plan will save a typical family in Iowa up to \$2,500 each year on medical expenses by:

- Driving adoption of state-of-the-art health information technology systems
- Improving access to preventive care and chronic disease management programs
- Requiring hospitals to collect and report health care cost and quality data
- Reforming our market structure to increase competition in the insurance and drug markets
- Reducing the costs of catastrophic illnesses for employers and their employees
- Lowering drug costs by allowing importation of safe medicines from other developed countries and increasing use of generics in public programs

Obama's plan will promote public health by:

- Requiring coverage of clinical preventive services and expand community-based prevention initiatives
- Increasing state and local preparedness for terrorist attacks and natural disasters.