

Hitting a Moving Target: ONS in the Public Policy, Be the Change!

Alec Stone, MA, MPA
Health Policy Director
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Role of the Nurses in Healthcare

Nurses today are playing new roles in coordinating care from multiple providers, managing caseloads of patients with intense care needs, and helping patients transition out of hospitals and into the home or other settings. They are working as "health coaches" and in other ways to prevent illness and promote wellness. And they are charting new paths in emerging fields like telehealth, informatics, and genetics and genomics, and as scientists and leaders in society.

Traditional RNs and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), meanwhile, are playing expanded roles as the health care system evolves to meet new needs. Once viewed as subservient and subordinate, nurses are now serving as full and essential partners on interdisciplinary health care teams. APRNs are opening nurse-led primary care clinics and operating independently—without physician supervision—in a growing number of states and in new settings, such as at retail pharmacies and "big-box" stores like CVS, Walgreens, and Target.

Implications of Access for Cancer Patients and the ACA

When the CBO analyzed the 2015 resolution to repeal Obamacare, it found in the first year alone, an additional 18 million people would no longer have insurance — or 45 million Americans (17 percent). That includes 10 million fewer buying plans on the individual market, 5 million fewer people covered through Medicaid, and 3 million fewer with job-based coverage.

But once Medicaid expansion and subsidies were repealed (two years after enactment), the number of uninsured Americans would increase by 27 million to 53 million Americans — or 19 percent of Americans.

By 2026, more than 59 million people or 21 percent of Americans would be uninsured.

Health Safety Net: National Support

A new poll suggests the country may be shifting toward the political left on the issue, with 62 percent saying it's the federal government's responsibility to make sure that all Americans have health care coverage, while 37 percent say it is not.

The survey findings from the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research indicate a change in public attitudes over the past few months, as concerns mounted about GOP legislation estimated to leave tens of millions without coverage.

Changing Attitudes

Seventy-three percent opposed giving states the option to let insurers charge some people higher premiums because of their medical history. And 57 percent opposed allowing states to reduce the types of benefits that federal law now requires insurers to cover. Similarly, 64 percent opposed allowing states to permit some health plans to omit coverage for mental health and drug addiction treatment. There was also solid opposition to Medicaid cuts (62 percent) and overwhelming disapproval (78 percent) for allowing insurers to raise premiums for older adults beyond what is currently permitted.

NIH and the Impact of the Federal Budget

We have a whole revolution that has appeared in terms of bringing together cancer and immunology to understand how it is that you can activate the immune system to go after cancer that it ought to be able to recognize but often the cancer has managed to evade that surveillance. And we are learning how to turn the immune system back on. I think it was a bit of a challenge in terms of the budget proposal for next fiscal year, and that is certainly something that caused alarm in the biomedical research community.--
Francis Collins, MD, PhD, NIH Director



LEADERSHIP WEEKEND

All Politics is Local

In the age of President Trump, surging seas of activists on the left and the right are drowning out local issues and forcing senators and representatives to answer locally for every national controversy. Never has that new environment been so perfectly captured than over the past week, when lawmakers returned home to their congressional districts. They discovered, if they didn't know already, that most voters were no longer paying much attention to core issues in their own communities. Thousands of voters headed to events hoping to ask their members of Congress a question or two. Again and again, rather than mimic a local civics class, the meetings took on the tone of a national news show.

References

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