This Week in Health Policy...

• Beacon Communities Program
• Hearing on Health Care Pricing
• State Role in High Risk Pools
On Tuesday, May 4, Vice President Biden and Secretary Sebelius announced 15 Beacon Communities across the country who would receive a total of $220 million for their innovations in adoption and meaningful use of health information technology.

These “beacon” communities will serve as models for other communities just starting the process of health IT implementation. They will share best practices and facilitate adoption and meaningful use of health IT.

Each of the 15 Beacon Communities represent a diverse consortium of institutions who have successfully implemented health IT:

- **Geographic diversity** – Beacon Communities are located across the country.
- **Population Density** – Beacon Communities serve both urban and rural populations.
- **Populations** – Beacon Communities address health disparities among minority populations.

Source: healthit.hhs.gov

Additional Information on the [Beacon Community Program](#).
## List of Beacon Community Program Awardees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beacon Community Awardee</th>
<th>Funding Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Community Services Council of Tulsa, Tulsa, Okla.</td>
<td>$12,043,948</td>
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<td>2. Delta Health Alliance, Inc., Stoneville, Miss.</td>
<td>$14,666,156</td>
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<td>4. Geisinger Clinic, Danville, PA</td>
<td>$16,069,110</td>
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<td>5. HealthInsight, Salt Lake City, Utah</td>
<td>$15,790,181</td>
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<td>6. Indiana Health Information Exchange, INC., Indianapolis, Ind.</td>
<td>$16,008,431</td>
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<td>7. Inland Northwest Health Services, Spokane, Wash.</td>
<td>$15,702,479</td>
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<td>8. Louisiana Public Health Institute, New Orleans, La.</td>
<td>$13,525,434</td>
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<td>9. Mayo Clinic Rochester, d/b/a Mayo Clinic College of Medicine, Rochester, Minn.</td>
<td>$12,284,770</td>
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<td>10. Rhode Island Quality Institute, Providence, R.I.</td>
<td>$15,914,787</td>
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<td>11. Rocky Mountain Health Maintenance Organization, Grand Junction, Colo.</td>
<td>$11,878,279</td>
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<td>13. The Regents of the University of California, San Diego, San Diego, Calif.</td>
<td>$15,275,115</td>
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<td>14. University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hilo, Hawaii</td>
<td>$16,091,390</td>
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<td>15. Western New York Clinical Information Exchange, Inc., Buffalo, N.Y.</td>
<td>$16,092,485</td>
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Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
On Thursday, May 6, the Energy and Commerce Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives held a legislative hearing on H.R. 4700, the Transparency in All Health Care Pricing Act of 2010; H.R. 2249, the Health Care Price Transparency Promotion Act of 2009; and H.R. 4803, the Patients' Right to Know Act.

Background on the bills:

- **What they are:** an attempt to enhance transparency in health care pricing
- **Why they matter:** The absence of transparency in health care pricing impedes consumers' ability to make informed health care decisions based on price. Economists and other experts have argued that we cannot effectively reform health care until we solve the value problem. The system's ability to define, measure, and reward value is handicapped until we solve the lack of transparency in pricing.

Read [background](#) on the legislation. Read [testimonies](#) from the hearing.
State Role in High Risk Pools

The recently enacted health reform legislation establishes a temporary national high-risk pool program to help uninsured individuals with pre-existing conditions get insurance. States are important partners in establishing the high risk pool programs.

In April, Secretary Sebelius sent letters to each state asking how they would like to participate in the high-risk pool program. So far, 48 states have indicated how they would like to participate: 30 states will administer their own high risk pool program, and 18 have opted to let HHS administer the program for their state. Click here for additional information on the high-risk pools.

States that have elected to run their own high-risk pool program:

- Alaska
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- D.C.
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Missouri
- Montana
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- South Dakota
- Vermont
- Washington State
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin

States that have elected to have HHS run the high-risk pool program:

- Alabama
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Indiana
- Louisiana
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- North Dakota
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- Wyoming
What You Can Do

• We want to hear from you. Are you affiliated with any of the 15 institutions in the Beacon Community Program or the Health IT Regional Extension Centers located across the country? If so, let us know – send us an email at healthpolicy@nmanet.org.

• Interested in participating in NMA Haiti Relief Efforts? Take our Haiti survey.

For the latest health policy news and information visit our page NMA Health Policy Updates

Continue to visit our Haiti Earthquake Relief page for information on relief efforts.
Resources


Legislation:

• H.R. 4700, the Transparency in All Health Care Pricing Act of 2010

• H.R. 2249, the Health Care Price Transparency Promotion Act of 2009

• H.R. 4803, the Patients' Right to Know Act