This Week in Health Policy...

- Medicaid Funding
- New Dietary Guidelines
- E-prescribing deadline
- ACO Advance Payment Initiative

Office of Health Policy and Government Relations
Protecting Medicaid: Eligibility and Enrollment in Jeopardy!

Proposals abound regarding how to reduce the nation’s health care spending. Along with many of the nation’s governors, the U.S. Congress is especially keen to control the growth of Medicaid spending, which increases during economic downturns, at exactly the time states’ revenues dwindle. Medicaid must be protected, for many reasons! Please urge your elected officials to preserve funding for this vital program. More details here.

Why Medicaid Matters:

• Largest provider of long-term care nationwide
• More responsive to economic crises than private insurance
• Covers services, such as home health care, that Medicare does not
• Cutting Medicaid reduces access to care, and increases disparities
• States lose $1.33 in federal revenue for every $1 they cut in Medicaid.
This week, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, the U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Regina Benjamin, and the First Lady of United States, Michelle Obama, unveiled *My Plate*, the nation’s **new dietary guidelines** which will replace the food ‘pyramid’ that has been in place for the last two decades. The new guidelines will complement the anti-obesity efforts of Mrs. Obama’s *Let’s Move!* Campaign, which the NMA has endorsed. More details about the guidelines [here](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).

Image credit: [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)
E-prescribing Deadline: Life After June 30

The deadline for submitting 10 electronic prescriptions under the Electronic Prescribing Incentive (eRx) Program is 30 June 2011. Non-compliant participants will have to pay a penalty. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will waive the 2012 e-prescribing penalty for providers who apply for exemptions by 1 October 2011. More details available here. CMS has also issued a proposed rule that would modify the eRx program. More details on the rule are available here.

Image credit: www.HealthITNow.org
Accepting Public Comment: ACO Advance Pay Initiative

The Innovation Center at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has issued a call for public comment on the Advance Payment Initiative for Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) entering the Medicare Shared Savings Program.

Comments will be accepted through 17 June 2011. Details about the initiative are available [here](#).
What You Can Do

• Please call your Governors and Members of Congress RIGHT NOW, and urge them to preserve Medicaid. Contact info here and here.

• Is Policy Beat helpful? Please send us feedback at healthpolicy@nmanet.org

• New email address? Let us know at healthpolicy@nmanet.org

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