



**Consumers for
AFFORDABLE
Health Care**

*Advocating the right to quality, affordable
health care for every man, woman and child*

News Release

EMBARGOED RELEASE UNTIL: May 3, 2010 at 11:30 am

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Maine Doctors, Families, Health Advocates Kick Off New Campaign to Make Sure Health Reform is Implemented Properly

New Effort Focuses on Improving Coordinated Care for Vulnerable Older Patients

(Augusta) Just one month after national health care reform was signed into law by President Obama, the [Maine Campaign for Better Care](#) (MCBC) is working to make sure that the law helps those who need it most. The Campaign's goal is to ensure vulnerable older patients and those with multiple health problems and their family caregivers get the comprehensive, coordinated, patient-centered and family-centered care they need. If we can make our health care system work for them, we can make it work for everyone.

“Care coordination is a key part of the national reform law. Care coordination will help consumers to save money through better care at lower cost. Studies show that better coordinated care can avoid costly medical errors, duplication, and waste. The Maine Campaign for Better Care will work with health care providers like those here today so that they have consumer input and the support needed to deliver better care,” said Joe Ditré, CAHC Executive Director. “For example, older patients with multiple health problems can have difficulty understanding their condition and doctor's orders. When patients and their family caregivers have their medical records, it promotes understanding and better care. Coordinated care can also provide links to critical community supports such as transportation to and from medical appointments and professional follow-up on doctor's orders.”

This new nationwide effort is led in Maine by [Consumers for Affordable Health Care](#), who is joined by several partner organizations and businesses including the American Heart Association- Founders Affiliate, City of Portland Minority Health Program, Direct Care Alliance- Maine Chapter, Eastern Area Agency on Aging, Law Office of Alice E. Knapp, Maine Council of Churches, Maine Council of Senior Citizens - Alliance for Retired Americans, Maine Equal Justice Partners, Maine Parent Federation, Maine People's Resource Center and Maine Women's Lobby. Nationally, the Campaign launches with some of the nation's most powerful groups coming together for the first time ever to work on this set of issues. The Steering Committee includes leaders from the [National Partnership for Women & Families](#), [Community Catalyst](#) and the [National Health Law Program](#) (NHeLP) and a diverse Consumer Coalition with more than 100 national, state and local organizations.

“The American Heart Association is a committed partner in this campaign nationally and in Maine.
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Reform has laid the key building blocks for the type of health system we should have to give patients the continuity and coordination of resources for their care, but we need to be vigilant and ensure that reform is implemented in ways that allow people with cardiovascular disease and their families to realize the maximum benefits of a reformed health care system. Our goal is to empower and engage patients and their caregivers to ensure that older people, or those with multiple health conditions get the optimal health care they need to allow them to enjoy the best quality of life possible,” says Dennise Whitley, Maine Advocacy Director of the American Heart Association-Founders Affiliate.

We are holding a press conference to kick off this Campaign Monday, May 3 at 11:30 at CAHC’s offices at 12 Church St in Augusta. The timing of this kick off is also fitting as the nation observes National Older Americans month in May.

You can learn more about the campaign and read stories of patients who need better care here: www.CampaignForBetterCare.org. You can also [view the results of a new poll](#) that was conducted by Lake Research Partners which outlines some of the problems in our health care system for those 50 and older. Other states taking part in the CBC include Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Consumers for Affordable Health Care is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that has been helping Maine people get quality, affordable health care for more than 20 years. If you have any public or private insurance questions please call our toll free consumer HelpLine at 1-800-965-7476.

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