



MAKING HEALTH CARE WORK FOR ARIZONA

Safeguarding the health of Arizona citizens is one of a governor's most important jobs. As Governor, I will work to improve health care services for Arizona children and senior citizens, provide better access to health care, prepare for disease epidemics and natural disasters, and control health costs without compromising the quality of care. Furthermore, as your Governor I will support and attract healthcare resources and centers of excellence that make Arizona a regional, national and eventually a world wide destination for those seeking the very best in healthcare. I strongly believe that building on our existing elements of excellence in health research and application of cutting edge care, we can provide Arizona a dynamic building block for a more diversified, sustainable and robust economy.

Together, we will work to improve policy and regulatory structures to monitor and maintain a safe healthcare environment, including:

Ensure funding for Arizona's voter-approved health insurance program. If the Governor and Legislature had their way in the most recent legislative session, Arizona's health care industry would have been devastated, losing more than 42,000 jobs and \$3 billion from the private economy. Under a Goddard administration, this kind of legislation will be dead on arrival.

Restoring funding for graduate physician education programs, which will result in more primary care physicians and specialists to provide health care services across Arizona.

Continue building the Phoenix Biomedical Campus with the University of Arizona.

Creating a prompt and well-organized pandemic and disaster response plan.

Implement targeted education and prevention programs to ensure Arizonans know how to protect themselves from infectious disease, including flu strains, swine flu, and pneumonia.

Financing Healthcare Coverage in Arizona

Increasingly, the rising cost of healthcare coverage has reduced the ability of employers, families and individuals to participate in employee sponsored health insurance. Simply put, many are ***still*** being priced out of the insurance market.

In order to create a robust healthcare system, we must lower health care costs by supporting early prevention and by maximizing state funding for health care programs that result in matching federal funds, increasing the resources available to our citizens. Affordability ultimately depends as well on better health behavior by all of us.

To save money and maximize the efficiency of healthcare resources, patients should have access to the most appropriate level of care and reduce the use of hospital emergency departments as a source of primary care services. Tools that I will employ to make coverage more affordable include:

Implement a high-risk pool and create a health insurance exchange funded by federal dollars.

Maximize federal matching funds for expanding coverage through AHCCCS.

Work collaboratively with Arizona tribes to ensure tribal members continue to have health coverage, in addition to effective disease management programs.

Seek federal funds through the new *Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMI)* to encourage innovation in healthcare delivery, redesign and health information systems.

Leverage the State's purchasing power to control medical inflation for AHCCCS, state employees and retirees

Avoid costly hospital readmissions.

Health Care Reform and Federally Sponsored Programs

After years of discussion and debate, the federal government passed healthcare reform. Much work remains. Health care reform accelerates the economic challenges faced by governments, businesses and individuals. As a result, our effort to improve health care and reduce the need for health services is a national imperative. Over the next decade, as federal health insurance reform is implemented, I will fight to:

Keep the costs to Arizona taxpayers low.

Simplify the system to allow for a seamless healthcare delivery.

Ensure that prices and quality are transparent.

Economic Development through the Healthcare System

A working economy needs a healthy, trained workforce and a healthcare system with the right tools. Arizona's medical physician resident population per 100,000 is 18.7 while the national average is 34.1, ***ranking us last in the United States***. In order to meet the growing demand for physicians, we must dramatically expand our training programs to keep pace with our projected population growth.

Recruiting and retaining more physicians within Arizona will not only contribute to an increase in quality health care services, but will significantly impact our economy by generating jobs, income and additional business development.

Promoting Coordination of Care

Every Arizonan has stories about how our health care system failed to meet their needs.

Coordination of care across the healthcare system continues to be a major problem for patients and their families.

Managing chronic conditions requires effective care coordination and ongoing care management to keep these conditions from becoming expensive emergencies. We must provide effective leadership to promote integration of care and better coordination of care between providers by supporting the implementation of electronic health records and the exchange of electronic health information between providers.

Arizona has been one of the last states to take advantage of the unprecedented federal funding opportunities to support the acquisition and implementation of electronic health record systems. As Governor, I will:

Promote integration of care across the healthcare system.
Maximize federal funds to support the statewide adoption of electronic health records and health information exchange technology to enhance the sharing of critical patient care records between providers.
Implement new payment methods to create incentives to better coordinate care.
Leverage the purchasing power of the State to drive down health care costs.

Ensuring Quality Care for Arizona's Children

Arizona's children have the right to quality healthcare. Period. Investing in children now will ensure a more stable economy and a healthier, more competitive workforce in the future. As Governor, I will:

Lift the freeze on KidsCare. It is unconscionable that this Governor and Legislature have forced thousands of children to forego the medical care that they need, all to save less than \$10 million annually. It is important to note that while Congress and the President, on August 10, 2010, approved approximately \$236 million in aid to KidsCare and AHCCCS, Arizona's legislative cuts to health care have been so severe, **the freeze on KidsCare will remain in effect.**

Support education and prevention programs that target childhood obesity and diabetes. Improve access to mental health care for children. Behavioral health problems, mental illness and depression in our youth and a leading cause of disability in the United States.

Support education and prevention programs for controlled and illegal substances. Preventing the use of illegal and controlled substances must continue to be a high priority in order to reduce child mortality. As Attorney General, my meth prevention programs have resulted in a significant decline in abuse by youths of this dangerous drug. Arizona must remain vigilant when it comes to protecting our children.

Ensuring Access to Care – Rural Arizona

The best way to make sure patients in rural areas have adequate access to primary care providers is to train physicians in rural healthcare settings. We already know Arizona is not producing enough primary care providers. Yet, **Arizona has reduced the amount of federal funds available to train future doctors, nurses, and other health professional for our rural communities.** As Governor, I will increase access to physicians to Arizona's rural communities.

Additionally, we must better use technology to bring services to remote areas of our state, by increasing access to telemedicine services. I continue to support the work of the Arizona Telemedicine Program which has delivered more than a million clinical and educational services to rural and underserved areas in Arizona.

Providers in numerous medical specialties, including dermatology, oncology, radiology, surgery, cardiology, psychiatry and home health care, can utilize telemedicine. The expanding applications of telemedicine will greatly improve delivery of healthcare services. Geographical isolation need no longer be an insurmountable obstacle to timely and quality medical care.

Improving Well-being for Arizona's Seniors

For over 25 years, Arizona has been a model in providing long-term care services to our elderly and disabled. Under the Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS), two-thirds of our citizens who qualify for long-term care are able to remain at home or in community residences (double the national average), helping keep program costs low.

Unfortunately, funding reductions imposed by the current leadership endanger many frail senior and disabled citizens. Short sighted cuts have reduced payments to long-term care providers, especially nursing homes, translating to fewer skilled nursing beds. Funding reductions have also reduced the number of community providers, who are critical to keeping our elderly and disabled safely in their homes. Fewer community providers mean higher rates of institutionalization – at higher costs.

In order to provide the quality of life our seniors deserve I propose:

- Protecting Arizona's state of the art ALTCS program.
- Enhancing programs that provide better coordination of care among seniors, their physicians and other health care providers, and their families.
- Improving quality of care in assisted living and nursing facilities through quality measures and enhanced oversight and enforcement.
- Providing enhanced home and community based services to allow people to live in their homes independently.
- Providing targeted education and prevention programs designed to reduce the occurrence of falls. Arizona citizens have one of the highest percentages of falls in the country. For seniors, a single fall can trigger a rapid decline in health, independence, and sometimes-even death.
- Continuing my work to protect patient rights through better access to, and provider compliance with, advance directives, living wills, and pre-hospital directives.

Behavioral Health

For nearly three decades, the state has been working to build a behavioral health system that results in better outcomes for Arizonans, both adults and children with Serious Mental Illness, substance abuse or other behavioral health issues. Today, that is no longer the case. Governor Brewer and the legislature have devastated the programs and treatment protocols for many of our most vulnerable citizens.

The budget cuts that took effect July 1 are beginning to have dire consequences for our state. More than 14,000 people with serious mental illness who are ineligible for AHCCCS/Medicaid are losing access to case management, therapists, hospital care, transportation to appointments, and have been forced to switch from brand to generic medications, which may not work for their illness.

Hundreds of Arizonans have been driven out of stable, supervised housing and must now find somewhere to live. People are being discharged from psychiatric facilities to homeless shelters which are already overcapacity and underfunded, and do not have the resources to provide case management.

During Jan Brewer's administration, resources for helping this population have been cut by over 50 percent. With growth in demand at a time of dwindling resources, we can expect more of these individuals living on the streets, putting increased pressure on public safety and emergency rooms to provide for their care, and costing our local communities millions.

This situation is not safe for our communities, and it increases both the short and long-term cost for all Arizonans.

As Governor, I will work to bring our safety net behavioral health system back to doing the job. I will:

Integrate the medical and behavioral health care components so that patients are receiving the treatment they need.

Find innovative ways of using private-public partnerships to increase housing and job opportunities.

Ensure that the State does not dictate the types of medications doctors prescribe to their patients.

Conclusion

At the most fundamental level, Arizona is at a crossroads that will determine what kind of health care system we will have. Today, Arizona is taking a long step back from our proud history of providing quality health care. We must not slip into poor access to care and uncertain healthcare quality.

As Governor, I will fight for a healthier Arizona. A state that cares responsibly for its seniors and children in need. A state that wins a national reputation for excellence in health related research and care. It is my dream that the new Arizona economy will be built to a significant degree on health care of the highest quality.