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SUSTAINING HEALTHCARE FOR ALL



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Prayer vigil unites religious leaders, community residents and the Coalition on health advocacy

The Coalition joined forces with Orange County Congregation Community Organization (OCCCO) on Sunday, August 2 in a prayer vigil held at Saint Callistus Parish in Garden Grove. Ongoing collaboration between OCCCO and the Coalition around healthcare bridged the gap between community clinics and local churches. During the vigil, Isabel Becerra and other community leaders gave detailed reports on the impact of state budget cuts on local community clinics in front of over 100 community and religious leaders.

“The Governor has chosen a ‘scorched earth’ approach to balancing the budget by eliminating Medi-Cal optional benefits and Traditional Clinic Programs, cutting 65% from EAPC and 60% from Healthy Families. Local clinics that rely on these programs face the deepest cut in the history of these programs,” said Isabel Becerra, Chief Executive Officer of the Coalition. “We are already reeling from the 30-50% increase in the uninsured population due to rising unemployment. In a county without a public hospital, where the low-income and medically-indigent rely on community clinics for their healthcare, the result of these very deep cuts will be catastrophic and long-lasting.”

OCCCO leaders were victorious in securing Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez to not only give a report on the health reform bill being debated in Congress, but also to promise a clear commitment to remain a champion for affordable healthcare. In the next several weeks, the Coalition will also be reaching out to the 5 other congressional representatives for OC.

The Coalition helps build ‘super region’ collaboration

The Coalition is engaged in a planning process to form a Southern California ‘super region’ that will enable the clinic consortia from Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Diego to work even more closely on a host of issues. Cathy Sakansky facilitated the first meeting held at the Coalition on July 22.

The planned tri-county collaboration will focus on clinical quality improvement, operational measures, and HIT infrastructure development. The planning process is slated to be completed by September 2009. With this ‘super region’ approach, the three consortia are upbeat about future opportunities for securing funding, particularly ARRA grants.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sup. Janet Nguyen to visit VNCOC and Nhan Hoa
Thursday, August 20, 9:30AM-12PM

**Community Health Centers on the Frontlines:
Orange County Health in a Growing Crisis**

A Community Forum by The Coalition
Saturday, August 22, 2009, 2:00-4:30PM
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Hall
1100 S Center Street, Santa Ana, CA

EHR demos help clinics trace their future with HIT

The Coalition continues to monitor HIT policy developments at the federal and state levels. As a result, the Coalition scheduled demonstrations of various commercial EHR systems to provide members a systematic way of deciding which system is best for them. Coalition staff are encouraged by the positive response from members.

Veronica Flores from Sierra Health Center commented on these demos: “I just want to inform everyone that the demo was awesome. This surpassed my expectation. The vendors were very well versed and knowledgeable. Thank you Coalition for making this possible!!”

KUDOS Notes: To Board Member Ellen Ahn for taking on the challenge to translate county mental health patient education materials; to our incoming Board Members for attending a series of orientation meetings and clinic tours. We hope you enjoyed them as much as we did!