

The California Health Care Coalition

Rising health care costs are hurting unions, workers and union employers across the country. Five straight years of double-digit premium increases have undermined wages and pensions, placed a growing strain on family and public budgets, reduced profits, and hurt the overall economy.

Employers have responded with aggressive cost shifting proposals and workers' share of health care costs has risen to crushing levels over the last two years. The political drive to replace group-based health benefits with defined contribution schemes is also accelerating. Meanwhile, the health industry dominates the debate – offering highly misleading explanations that blame consumers while ignoring entirely the problems of price inflation, supply-induced demand for profitable medical services and products, and deficient quality that drive up prices for all of us.

The California Health Care Coalition (CHCC) is a growing network of unions, health and welfare trust funds and union employers dedicated to stabilizing health care costs and improving quality where our members live and work.

CHCC's goal is to achieve maximum value for health care dollars by holding health insurers and providers accountable for the delivery of high quality patient care.

Working in close alignment with CalPERS, our strategy includes:

- Organizing public and private sector health benefits purchasers to demand high quality at fair prices
- Educating plan participants, elected officials and the general public about key cost drivers and what we must do to reform health care markets
- Establishing and applying a common set of performance standards for health plans, hospitals and physicians
- Negotiating collectively with health plans and providers on cost and quality issues
- Restructuring networks to include high quality, high value health care providers
- Promoting controlled competition through vigorous anti-trust enforcement and strengthened public oversight.

We must overcome our fragmentation as purchasers in order to effectively challenge excessive provider charges, high costs and deficient quality. Providers have consolidated and so must we. Unless organized labor and employers together become aggressively involved in matters related to health care costs and quality, we will just be generous checking accounts for an unaccountable industry, draining away wages and retirement funds to pay for health care that we neither control nor evaluate. There is strength in numbers.

Please join us.

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