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National Reform Holds Promise for California's Communities of Color

81% of uninsured African Americans and 60% of Latinos and Asian and Pacific Islanders could gain health coverage

Newly released [factsheet](#) by the California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN) shows national reform efforts could benefit 2.76 million people of color who are uninsured in California . Through Medicaid expansion and public subsidies, low-income Californians would gain access to health coverage that would be otherwise unattainable.

“Just enacting the reforms in the House or Senate proposals would secure access to health insurance for millions of Californians,” said Marty Martinez, MPP, Policy Director for the California Pan-Ethnic Health Network. “It would be a dramatic change for the better.”

The data found that 81% of African Americans, and 60% of Latinos and Asian and Pacific Islanders who are currently uninsured could gain coverage under reform.

“People of color currently make up 73% of California ’s uninsured,” states Alice Hm Chen, MD, MPH, Medical Director, Adult Medical Center , San Francisco General Hospital . “By working to make sure that health coverage is inclusive and affordable, national efforts can go a long way towards reducing health disparities in the state.”

Not every Californian will be covered under national reform. The proposals do not end the five year waiting period for lawful immigrants to access Medicaid, and in the Senate bill, undocumented immigrants would be prohibited from using their own money to purchase health insurance in the national exchange.

“To create a healthy, vibrant workforce and prosperous state, we need everyone to pay their fair share and have a stake in an affordable health care system” said Reshma Shamasunder, Director of the California Immigrant Policy Center . “We look forward to building on the current efforts to make sure our health care system works for all Californians.”

To find more information about the priority issues in the health care reform proposals impacting communities of color, please go to www.cpehn.org or call Ellen Wu, Executive Director, California Pan-Ethnic Health Network: (510) 832-1160.

The California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN) works to ensure that all Californians have access to quality health care and can live healthy lives. We gather the strength of communities of color to build a united and powerful voice in health advocacy. Together, we work to evolve health care from a one-size-fits-all approach to a system that works for people from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds. For more information about CPEHN go to www.cpehn.org.