How Do We Face the Uncertain Future of Health Care?

The HIV community can show the world how to embrace compassion.

January 5, 2017 By Matthew Rose

I have tried hard to write this piece to give individuals insights about what is to come and how we can prepare. I've read hundreds of articles, listened to dozens of analysts, talked with federal officials and been a part of a number of high-level policy discussions. From all that, I have some bad news. Given all the information that's been gathered and poured over we are still stuck facing the unknown.

However that does not mean we are in the dark, cast aside wanting for the next unpredictable blow. It is time to once again wake the sleeping dragon that has been the HIV community at its best. When are a community that has changed the course of how governments respond to people and crisis. We made people outside our own community care about the lives and needs of those they never imagined were among them. But with strength, passion, intelligence and determination, we've shown the world how to change one's fortune. And while a specific attack against us is not immediate, the greater assault to our overall health is pending: an attack on the Affordable Care Act (ACA, or Obamacare), a system that is working though not prefect. We also face dangerous assaults on our rights that could cripple our health care for years if not decades. These attacks could turn back all the gains we've made against this plague. The removal of the ACA represents massive issues not just for the HIV community but for the health of our entire country.

Repeal of the ACA...

- would recklessly remove health coverage from millions of Americans and remove critical protections for individuals, jeopardizing the health of our nation.
- would destroy the insurance exchange market well beyond the ACA, likely causing massive spikes in premiums and a drastic drop in the availability of coverage and services covered.
- would be grossly irresponsible without also putting in place a measure that provides the same

level of care, coverage and consumer protections the ACA currently provides.

- would allow insurance companies to return to the days of charging women and those with pre-existing conditions (up to 129 million individuals) significantly more for health coverage.
- would leave the 12 million individuals who still don’t have health any insurance without any options for affordable health care.
- would mean that 30 million people lose coverage.
- would mean that 105 million people, including people with employer coverage, once again face potential financial ruin.
- would mean that 129 million peoplewith pre-existing conditions like cancer, asthma, and diabetes could be denied or charged more.

We are living in unprecedented times. But we know that we have passion, innovation, strength and determination to make a new way. We’ve figure out how to do it before in a world that has seem to have gone mad, and we shall do so again. Because it is how you response to moments of strife that define your character. And the character of our community has never been in question for we made a world learn to care and embrace compassion.

So for now we fight, we will rally our people and bring our strength to bear and once against change the course of a nation. Today we will stand tall and say You will not strip our health care away.

Take action today by contacting your senators and telling then to Protect Our Care!

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