



## 2017 Priorities for Improving the Health & Health Care Outcomes of AA&NHPI Populations

AAPCHO requests that both national committees commit to improve the health and care of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA&NHPI) populations, to demonstrate your commitment to programs tailored to the cultural and language needs of AA&NHPI populations and to reduce health disparities. AAPCHO would like to see this commitment through action, and written in both platforms.

AAPCHO is a national not-for-profit association of 35 community-based health care organizations, 29 of which are Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). AAPCHO members are dedicated to promoting advocacy, collaboration, and leadership to improve the health status and care access of medically underserved AA&NHPIs in the U.S., its territories, and its freely associated states.

AA&NHPIs suffer more from certain diseases when compared to whites or other racial/ethnic groups. Additionally there is a lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate health insurance, health care services and other programs in existence to serve AA&NHPIs. We ask that you address the following:

### **Expand health insurance coverage options for all AA&NHPI Populations**

*Protect the coverage expansions in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and expand Medicaid in all states*

The ACA has resulted in the coverage of thousands of previously uninsured or underinsured AA&NHPIs through the Health Insurance Marketplaces and Medicaid expansion. Reject efforts to roll back this coverage, reject efforts to erode Medicaid and the ACA patient protections, and support increased Medicaid expansion.

*Reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)*

CHIP provides a robust benefit package to children and pregnant women but it needs to be reauthorized in 2017. Support the reauthorization and funding of this critical program.

*Allow all patients to enroll in coverage*

Despite the dramatic coverage gains under the ACA, some AA&NHPI immigrants remain ineligible to enroll in coverage. Remove barriers for all immigrants to enroll in the Health Insurance Marketplace, and support Medicaid and CHIP access for all.

*Implement coverage of legally present immigrant children and pregnant women*

States have the opportunity to enroll legally present immigrant children and pregnant women in their Medicaid and CHIP programs, providing critical prenatal and pediatric care to AA&NHPI families. Continue to support the implementation of this critical coverage pathway.



## **Invest programs to support culturally and linguistically appropriate care and reduce health disparities**

*Ensure that health insurance provides access to culturally and linguistically appropriate care*

Strong federal regulations and appropriate reimbursement for health care providers will increase the ability of AA&NHPI populations to receive the holistic and appropriate care they need. Support strong federal regulations and payment for enabling services.

*Enforce non-discrimination rule*

The Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights has developed a strong foundation of protections of health care rights for AA&NHPI populations with limited English proficiency. Enforce the application of this rule to ensure that no one faces health care discrimination because of limited English proficiency or other cultural barriers.

*Develop health and health insurance literacy programs*

Building on the strong foundation of CMS's Coverage to Care tools, health and health insurance literacy programs help AA&NHPI populations new to coverage utilize their new care to improve their health. Invest in Coverage to Care and support other health literacy programs targeted at AA&NHPI populations.

## **Support primary care and prevention programs**

*Strengthen and protect health centers*

AAPCHO's member health centers—and all federally qualified health centers—provide high quality, comprehensive primary care to all patients, regardless of their ability to pay. Health centers are a health care lifeline to their patients, and the foundation of the health care safety net. Ensure adequate funding for existing health centers, and additional support for new efforts to expand coverage for AA&NHPI health centers.

*Eliminating health disparities: hepatitis B*

A number of AAPCHO members see a higher number of patients with or at-risk for hepatitis B, a “silent killer” that can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer, or liver failure. Eliminate the virus by increasing the availability of hepatitis B vaccine, improve screening through preventive service implementation, and promote linkages-to-care and treatment.

*Support culturally and linguistically concordant health center workforce*

Without the presence of linguistic and cultural concordant workforce, it becomes incredibly difficult for limited English proficient patients to build trust with their providers, and therefore access health care services. Patients need to feel understood at the health center, so that providers and allied health workers can provide effective care. Provide equitable health care services to all patients; promote a health care workforce that reflects the communities they serve.



### **Improve data collection efforts**

*Increase data collection efforts, with a specific focus on disaggregated data for AA&NHPI populations*

Data collection is critical for quality measurement and to inform policy decisions. Support continued data collection. Ensure that the data are disaggregated to measure the impact of policy on different subpopulations that have unique health care needs.

*Integrate data on social determinants of health (SDOH) into key federal programs*

A wide range of social and cultural factors impact an individuals health care and play an important role in determining their health care outcomes. SDOH should be included in data collection, quality measurement and in policy development.