



THE HAWAI‘I UNINSURED PROJECT

Fourth Quarter 2003

Milestones

2003 Marked by *Success* for The Hawai‘i Uninsured Project

‘Research-based community collaboration’ was the 2003 theme for The Hawai‘i Uninsured Project.

Thanks to federal and national grant funding awarded to the State Department of Health, the project broadened and strengthened its community coalition, and organized its membership into several work groups to discuss and study the issues. The Hawai‘i Uninsured Project commissioned a number of surveys to gauge the viewpoints and attitudes of employers, the workforce and the general public about health coverage issues.

The University of Hawaii’s Social Science Research Institute modeled various coverage expansion scenarios proposed by the work groups. And the team also conducted new research and analyzed existing surveys to give Hawaii a better understanding of the uninsured.

The research results are now posted at www.HealthCoverageHawaii.org.



Happy Holidays to more than 60 collaborators, which compose The Hawai‘i Uninsured Project. And a very special mahalo to the State Department of Health for its leadership.



2003 HIGHLIGHTS



Governor Linda Lingle

Governor Pledges *Solutions* for Hawaii’s *Uninsured*

Nearly 200 attendees including local lawmakers and national experts gathered for the October 2003 Coverage for All Conference to address Hawaii’s growing population without health coverage.

Governor Linda Lingle described health coverage as the “most perplexing issue of her candidacy.” The Governor announced that she wants increased funding for

community clinics—a major primary care provider to the uninsured. She also advocated for improved outreach by the state for programs such as QUEST, noting that enrollment would improve “if we went after the uninsured like politicians went after votes.”

She offered ideas such as:

- waiving the premium tax to lure new health insurers to Hawaii
- raising the cap on the number of Quest-eligible recipients
- passing legislation so small businesses can band together to negotiate group health plans.

Coverage for All Conference 2003

Report Now Posted online at www.HealthCoverageHawaii.org

Go to Page 3 for more highlights from 2003

Hawaii's people deserve better access to *quality*, affordable health care.

CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

Senator Rosalyn Baker

Chair of the Senate Health Committee

Senator Melodie Aduja

*Member of the Senate Ways
and Means Committee*

Representative Scott Nishimoto

*Vice Chair of the House
Health Committee*

Representative Cindy Evan

Vice Chair of Education Committee

Ken Takayama

*Acting Director of Legislative
Reference Bureau*

Dr. Chiyome Fukino

Director of State Department of Health

Barbara Yamashita

*Chief of Community Health Division
of State Department of Health*

Loretta Fuddy

*Chief of Family Health Services
of State Department of Health*

Lillian Koller

*State Director of Department
of Human Services*

Aileen Hiramatsu

*State's Department of Human
Services Med-Quest Division*

**Conference
Bridges States
Experiences,
Helps Hawaii Prioritize
Health Care Issues**

Data Watch
U.S. Census Bureau Report
Indicates Hawaii's
Uninsured is On the Rise
According to the September 2003
U.S. Census Bureau report,
123,000 individuals were uninsured
for all of 2002.

A 10-member Hawaii delegation attended the October 2003 national conference entitled "Using **Limited Health Care Dollars Wisely: What States Can Do to Create the Health System They Want.**"

The Hawaii team selected access to health care as a top priority for the state—defining access as "readily available, affordable, community-based, consumer-oriented, quality health care delivered in culturally appropriate ways in a timely manner."

Priorities identified included:

- Health insurance coverage for part-time workers
- Enrollment of all those in families that meet QUEST's income eligibility
- Parity for mental health and substance abuse services
- Reducing ethnic health disparities
- Stimulating market place competition.

The Hawaii team agreed to closer collaboration between the state departments, the legislature and The Hawai'i Uninsured Project to improve access. Oregon, Minnesota, Arkansas, Washington and Maine also attended.

www.HealthCoverageHawaii.org

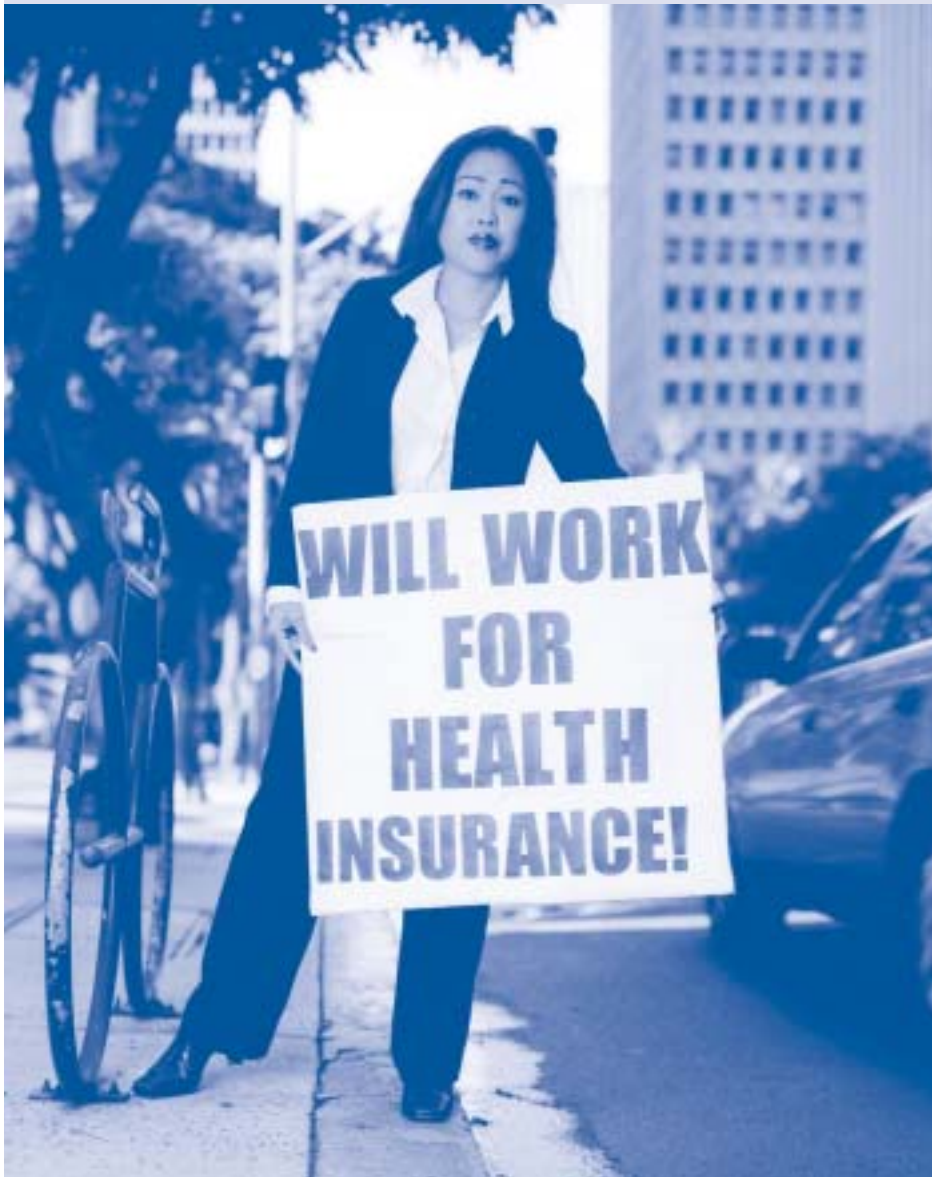
2 0 0 3 H I G H L I G H T S

State Department of Human Services Champions Medicaid Reform

On the job for less than a year, the new State Department of Human Services Director Lillian Koller's "can do" approach is making Medicaid programs such as QUEST much more user-friendly.

In partnership with Hawai'i Covering Kids and the Hawai'i Primary Care Association, the Department is making good on its promise to improve outreach and enrollment. New, simplified application forms for children and pregnant women are in the works, and passive renewal will ensure that re-enrollment is easier.

In a statement of support for The Hawai'i Uninsured Project, Koller has said that she believes that all of Hawaii's children and youth should have access to quality and affordable health care coverage, and has committed to capturing more than 10,000 eligible children who are not enrolled.



'Compact' Aid on its Way for Hawaii

A Hawai'i Uninsured Project's work group reported that federal aid looks promising to offset health care costs of uninsured Pacific Islanders in Hawaii as a result of the Compacts of Freely Associated States.

Passage of legislation doubles aid to Hawaii and U.S. Pacific territories to offset the cost of a number of services such as education, health, and human services provided to migrants from certain Freely Associated States. Having cleared the Senate and the House, the \$30 million aid package now goes to the White House for the President's signature.

In 2002, just three of Hawaii's hospitals (Queen's, Straub, and Kapiolani) provided \$15 million in uncompensated services for Pacific Islanders, according to the Hawaii Health Survey conducted by the Healthcare Association of Hawaii.

In a 2003 statewide telephone survey conducted by Ward Research for The Hawai'i Uninsured Project, almost 30 percent of employers claimed they would alter health insurance benefits if the law allowed it. The top 2 changes would be to require the employees to contribute more to the premium (No. 1) or to eliminate health insurance altogether (No. 2).

Why is Health Care and Ultimately, Health Insurance So *Expensive*?

Several factors contribute, and consumer expectations to access the best that America's health care industry can offer play a major role.

MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY. New advances in medical technology dramatically improve health, but adds to medical costs.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS. Use of drugs continues to rise and so has the demand for newer, expensive drugs. As a result, the cost of prescription drugs continues to increase.

INCREASED USAGE. Health care expenses have risen as usage rises. Higher use translates to more claims and higher plan rates.

AGING POPULATIONS. Hawaii has the nation's largest percentage of elderly residents.

HOSPITAL DYNAMICS. Highly competitive wages in response to personnel shortages, as well as compliance mandates and operational issues can contribute to the overall cost of health care.

The Hawai'i Uninsured Project is a statewide initiative dedicated to making health care available to all the people of Hawai'i. It is a project of the Hawaii Institute for Public Affairs.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Virginia Pressler
Chairperson

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Susan Chandler	Barbara Luksch
Andrew Chang	Rich Meiers
Cliff Cisco	Deane Neubauer
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Susan Forbes	David Peters
Loretta Fuddy	Hardy Spoehr
Beth Giesting	Kelvin Taketa
Gary Hamada	James Tollefson
Michael Hamnett	Paul Tom
Na'unanikinau Kamali'i	Sylvia Yuen
Lillian Koller	

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