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***Healthy Ideas: Californians Weigh In on Health Care Reform***  
KQED Public Radio's *Health Dialogues* Launches New Initiative  
[www.kqed.org/healthyideas](http://www.kqed.org/healthyideas)

May 1, 2009, San Francisco --- Earlier this year, President Barack Obama declared his goal to enact comprehensive health care reform by the end of 2009. In response to the administration's call for ideas on meeting this challenge, KQED Public Radio's *Health Dialogues* is launching *Healthy Ideas: Californians Weigh In on Health Care Reform* ([www.kqed.org/healthyideas](http://www.kqed.org/healthyideas)). An online blog goes live today, where people of all backgrounds can share their opinions about access to health care, rising health care costs, and other key subjects in the health care debate.

Each week, through July 1, thought leaders, health care professionals, and the general public can go online and discuss our nation's health care problems – and ideas on how to solve them. The conversation will continue over the air with a special edition of *Health Dialogues* airing Thursday, June 18 at 8pm on KQED Public Radio 88.5FM San Francisco, 89.3FM Sacramento.

In 2008, the average premium for family coverage in California was \$13,427. The California Healthcare Foundation reported in December 2008 that [our state has about 6.6 million uninsured](#), more than any other state in the union. Our economy contains a large proportion of service industries, which are less likely to offer health insurance. California also has a large immigrant population in a state known to have a high cost of living. California's needs are not the same needs of other states, and KQED wants Washington to know.

KQED has invited a group of health care professionals and reform advocates to start the online discussions, which center around four specific topics:

**Covering the Uninsured**

Should all Americans be required to purchase health insurance? What options for coverage should the uninsured and under-insured have, and how do you assess when coverage is affordable? Bloggers include: Lucien Wulsin, Jr., JD (Insure the Uninsured Project), Anthony Wright (Health Access), Claudia Chaufan, MD, PhD (Institute for Health and Aging, University of California at San Francisco), and John R. Graham (Pacific Research Institute).

**Eliminating Disparities**

How can federal health care reform address the societal determinants of health, such as poverty, safety, housing, schools, transportation and access to healthy food and safe parks? Bloggers include: Anthony Iton, MD, JD, MPH (Alameda County Public Health Department), Antronette Yancey, MD, MPH (Department of Health Services, UCLA School of Public Health), and Ellen Wu (California Pan-Ethnic Health Network).

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### Improving Quality and Access

How would you reform the current fee-for-service payment system to ensure that the nation rewards high quality care and better utilizes health care dollars? Bloggers include: Robert Phillips (Human Services and Youth Development, California Endowment), Lark Galloway-Gilliam (Community Health Councils, Inc.), and Peter Lee, JD (National Health Policy, Pacific Business Group on Health).

### Slowing Costs

The federal stimulus package includes \$1.1 billion for comparative effectiveness research. What should the criteria be to determine if new medical treatments and technologies are worth the price? Bloggers include: Dana Goldman, PhD (RAND Corporation), Marian Mulkey, MPH, MPP (California Health Care Foundation), and Richard Kronick, PhD (University of California at San Diego).

At the conclusion of the project, a summary of the ideas and issues raised in these discussions will be presented to Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus and Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Chairman Edward Kennedy.

*Healthy Ideas* is produced and reported by:

Researcher/reporter – Sarah Varney

Producer – Nick Vidinsky

Senior Producer, Health Dialogues – Polly Stryker

Executive Producer, Health Dialogues – Raul Ramirez

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