

Grant Outcomes Report

Improving the Analysis of Health Insurance Expansion Options for New York State

The Problem:

Approximately 2.5 million of New York's 19 million residents lacked health insurance in 2007, according to estimates from the United Hospital Fund, a New York health policy center.¹ Proposals for increasing coverage had been offered, but needed to be analyzed for their responsiveness to New York's health care system, their costs and consequences, and their acceptance by the public.

Grant Activities & Outcomes:

With a grant from the New York State Health Foundation's Coverage Consortium initiative, the staff at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health aimed to guide policymakers in assessing reform proposals by:

- ▶ describing in detail select proposals under consideration;
- ▶ modeling costs and consequences of those proposals; and
- ▶ summarizing public sentiment regarding expanding coverage.

Olveen Carrasquillo, M.D., M.P.H., and Sherry Glied, Ph.D., co-directed the project, which was proposed for two years. After it started, Foundation and project staff agreed that the emergence of Federal reform proposals and the demands of conducting detailed New York-specific microsimulation made conducting that level of simulation unfeasible. They reduced the project to one year and adjusted the activities accordingly.

¹ "Health Insurance in New York, 2006-2007." New York, NY: United Hospital Fund, June 2009. Retrieved from <http://www.uhfny.org/assets/649>, September 1, 2010.

KEY INFORMATION:

GRANTEE

Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York, Mailman School of Public Health

GRANT TITLE

Improving the Analysis of Health Insurance Expansion Options for New York State

DATES

October 1, 2007—June 2, 2009

GRANT AMOUNT

\$181,073

GRANT ID

2055503

FUNDING

NYSHealth Coverage Consortium Initiative

Carrasquillo and Glied reported the following findings from analyzing and modeling five insurance expansion approaches—one single payer, three incremental, and one market-based:

- ▶ The single payer approach would cover all New Yorkers, provide the most comprehensive benefits, and be the simplest to administer. It would also cost the most public money—\$66.8 billion per year.
- ▶ The market-based approach would cover between 100,000 and 130,000 additional people. Coverage would be less generous than many current options and would involve significant cost-sharing. This option would cost approximately \$130 million in new public spending annually.
- ▶ The least generous incremental option would cover approximately 500,000 people at a public cost of \$1 billion. The most generous approach would cover 1 million people, but would cost more.

After analyzing transcripts of public testimony on three proposals under consideration by State officials, Carrasquillo and Glied reported:

- ▶ People testifying came from diverse backgrounds but, “there was overwhelming consensus that health care in New York State is in need of substantial change. All presenters agreed that policymakers need to make health insurance a reform priority in New York State.”
- ▶ “While most presenters agreed on these [access, affordability, and quality] as tenets of reform, they put forward quite varied and often contradictory opinions and policy prescriptions on how health insurance expansions should proceed.”
- ▶ Major ideas for reform included:
 - build on existing public programs;
 - establish a single-payer system;
 - establish individual or employer mandates;
 - use market-based initiatives;
 - explore benefit package options; and
 - improve the delivery system.

They also conducted a Web-based survey about whether New York differs from other states in: demographics, economics, governance, hospital systems, physicians/medical practice, and insurance products. Approximately 33 people took the survey.

Publications:

Carrasquillo O, Tilipman N, and Glied S. *Health Reform in New York State: A Qualitative Analysis of Testimony Provided at Public Hearings*, New York: Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, March 2008. Available at: <http://www.nyshealthfoundation.org/content/document/detail/986/>

Glied S, Tilipman N, and Carrasquillo O. *Analysis of Five Health Insurance Options for New York State*. New York: Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, January 2009. Available at: <http://www.nyshealthfoundation.org/content/document/detail/1498/>