

# Consumer Advocacy's Role in Successful Health Care Reform



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# About Community Catalyst

Community Catalyst is a national non-profit advocacy organization dedicated to quality affordable health care for all. Since 1997, Community Catalyst has been working in partnership with national, state and local consumer organizations, policymakers, and foundations to build the consumer and community leadership required to transform the American health system so it serves everyone—especially vulnerable members of society. Our unique approach focuses on building consumer advocacy to impact health care policy, and leveraging that influence for change both in states and at the federal level

Community Catalyst **provides national leadership** by bringing our in-depth knowledge to national debates to ensure that local consumer voices and interests influence federal health care policy. We **build advocacy infrastructure** by delivering an established and respected program of advocacy and support for local, state, regional and national consumer-based health reform efforts. We **lead broad-based issue campaigns** in partnership with our extensive network of health advocacy organizations and coalitions to increase organized consumer impact on timely and significant health policy issues. We **promote innovation** through out-of-the-box thinking and developing of new projects, and translate our extensive knowledge of policy and programs into innovative, hands-on strategies to improve the health care system.



# Overview of Presentation

- The work ahead
- Key tasks and opportunities for consumer advocacy organizations
- The Massachusetts Affordable Care Together!!  
Coalition Experience

# The Work Ahead



Courtesy of [whitehouse.gov](http://whitehouse.gov)

# The Work Ahead

- Building public support and implementing early reforms
- Defending existing programs and current levels of coverage
- Developing policy regulations at the national and state levels
- Enrolling people in new programs and monitoring impact of reform
- Ensuring sustainability through health care delivery system reform

# Building Public Support & Implementing Early Reforms

## Key Tasks:

- ✓ Develop broad based coalitions
- ✓ Adapt and develop messages for your communities and political environments
- ✓ Respond quickly
- ✓ Mobilize your grassroots
- ✓ Stories, stories, stories

# Defending existing programs and coverage

## Key Tasks:

- ✓ Develop/strengthen coalitions and relationships with stakeholders
- ✓ Outreach/enrollment efforts for CHIP and Medicaid
- ✓ Look for consumer-friendly cost-saving measures

# Developing policy and regulations

## Key Tasks:

- ✓ Develop understanding of provisions and timelines
- ✓ Identify key decisions that will have impact on consumers in your state
- ✓ Provide input to nat'l orgs, federal officials, commissions, state legislators
- ✓ Defend state programs
- ✓ Create a unified message among partners
- ✓ Stories, stories, stories

# Lessons from Massachusetts





[www.hcfama.org](http://www.hcfama.org)

*Coalition for Social Justice*



# How do they do it?

- Broad stakeholder groups
- Decision making structure
- Consumer voice at every decision point
- Grasstops and grassroots
- Policy and Communications
- Monitoring

# Key Takeaways

- Broad based coalition
- Consumer representation in planning and decision making process
- Educate and build support
- Defend existing programs
- Highlight quick wins