

BUILDING A POLITICAL MOVEMENT



CWA's Health Care Reform Principles

1. **Cover everyone:** Guarantee everyone quality affordable health care with comprehensive benefits.
2. **Control costs:** Regulate insurance companies, reduce bureaucracy, promote prevention and cost-effective care, and allow government to negotiate drug and other prices.
3. **Strong government role:** To set and enforce the rules for insurance companies and providers, and offer a choice of a public insurance plan and private insurance options in addition to employer-based health benefits.
4. **Improve quality:** By promoting preventive care, evidence-based care and safe staffing standards.
5. **Broad-based financing:** To spread financing throughout the system and assure that all employers pay their fair share.

Detailed Version

1. **Cover everyone.** We believe that everyone needs comprehensive health care they can count on regardless of their health or income, whether they are working or not, whether they retire early or not, are laid off or on strike. A system based on employers who voluntarily offer coverage and that allows some employers to freeload on others cannot survive.
2. **Control costs.** The system must be affordable, so any reform should streamline bureaucracy and reduce the high overhead costs and profits required of our complicated private insurance system. Insurance should be provided in the largest pools possible, thereby spreading risk widely and cost-effectively. The government should negotiate prices with drug companies and other providers. We need a major investment in electronic health information and chronic care coordination to improve outcomes.
3. **Strong government role.** While the market has an important role to play in health care, the government must play a central role. It should guarantee coverage and help make it more affordable. Government should set and enforce the rules by which private insurance operates, making sure that no insurance company can increase its profit by denying people care. The government should also ensure that people have a choice to get their coverage through a public insurance plan offering comprehensive benefits at an affordable price.
4. **Improve quality.** The care we receive should be of the highest quality, based on best practices that are the most cost effective. There needs to be a new focus on preventive care – our system is too focused on just treating illness. Quality care means assuring safe staffing levels for nurses with adequate and appropriate training for all caregivers.
5. **Broad-based financing.** The health care system must be financed fairly, according to one's ability to pay. Broad-based financing will spread the costs throughout the economy so that some employers – many of them union employers – are not left to carry the burden. Such financing will also mean that wage increases will no longer be eaten up by health cost increases.