

## A Declaration for the Health of America

**Our health care system should support the health of all our people in the communities in which we live.**

- **80% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “We must make sure every person in America has health coverage to assure affordable access to the health care services they need.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*<sup>®</sup>, n=5502)
- **68% Support** a health reform proposal that requires that everyone have health insurance, with the government helping those who cannot afford it. (*The Commonwealth Fund, January 2008*)

### Principles

**We believe a health care system should:**

- **Make our health the center of the system and build programs and services to support our health.**
  - **71% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “We must let the public have a larger role in designing and managing a new health care system.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*<sup>®</sup>, n=5486)
- **Assure we have the power, authority, resources and responsibility to make our own health care decisions about our physical and mental well-being.**
  - **86% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “Health care professionals should be required to give patients information about the costs and benefits of treatments and services so people can make good choices.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*<sup>®</sup>, n=5499)
- **Give us the tools and information we need to make these decisions.**
  - **92% of Americans believe** computerized medical records would be an effective strategy to improve care quality, with a substantial majority seeing electronic medical records as being very effective. (*The Commonwealth Fund, August 2006*)
  - **Nearly all adults (95%) feel** it is important to have information about the quality of care provided by different doctors or hospitals, with three-quarters (77%) saying this is very important. (*The Commonwealth Fund, August 2006*)
  - **91% of Americans think** it is important to have information about the costs of care before getting care. (*The Commonwealth Fund, August 2006*)
  - **94% of Americans consider** it important to have easy access to their own medical records. (*The Commonwealth Fund, August 2006*)
  - **60-80% of internet users** go to the internet for health care information. (*CodeBlueNow! Dispatch: Microsoft Brings Technology Into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, an interview with Bill Crouse, MD, Senior Director, Worldwide Health, Microsoft Corporation, June 2008*)

### Core Elements

**We believe a health care system ought to:**

- **Guarantee a core set of health care services.**
  - **63% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “We should have one set of basic health benefits for all our people.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*<sup>®</sup>, n=5499)
- **Focus first on prevention and health promotion.**
  - **78% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “Health care services should stress preventing disease rather than relying on high technology cures.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*<sup>®</sup>, n=5508)

- **Assure access to all licensed health care professionals.**
  - **71% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “Basic health benefits should include coverage for any licensed health care professional, such as naturopathic physicians, midwives, acupuncturists, chiropractors, and massage therapists, as long as they are certified and licensed by the state and by their profession.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*®, n=5551)
- **Be accountable to the people and their communities for quality, access and cost.**
  - **85% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “We need the same kind of public reporting and accountability in health care that we have in public companies, such as water and power companies, so we know where the money comes from, how the money is spent, and why.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*®, n=5553)
- **Improve care by constantly researching and adjusting health care practices.**
  - **77% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “We need to have uniform standards and guidelines that health care professionals can use to make sure we receive the most effective care.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*®, n=5412)
- **Reduce the employers’ role in health insurance.**
  - **64% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “Health insurance should be a shared responsibility of individuals, employers and government.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*®, n=5444)
  - **56% prefer** a universal coverage program over the current health system, in which most people have coverage through private employers. (*ABC News/Kaiser Family Foundation/USA Today, 2006*)
- **Decrease administrative waste and cost.**
  - **71% Strongly Agree or Agree** that “There is enough money already going into US health care to provide quality care for all our people. We just need to make sure the money is used more effectively and efficiently.” (*CodeBlueNow! Pulse*®, n=5333)
- **Address ways in which poverty, the environment and behavior affect our health.**
  - **Over 70% of affluent Americans** report very good to excellent health – almost twice as many as poor Americans. But in the middle levels, good health decreases significantly. (*Unnatural Causes, 2008*)
  - **Low-income and Middle-income Americans have twice the rate** of chronic diseases as the affluent. A similar pattern holds for stroke, heart disease, eventually contributing to excess death, especially for middle and low income Americans. (*Unnatural Causes, 2008*)

#### **About the CodeBlueNow! Pulse®**

The CodeBlueNow! Pulse® was developed as an analytical public policy and civic-engagement tool. It is used to identify areas of common ground on health care reform. The data from this tool shows consensus on key values and core elements the respondents support. The survey presents respondents with a series of “value statements.” These value-statements were designed to identify the values and priorities people want in a health care system, what they think about paying for services, whether everyone should be covered, and how strongly they feel about financing and management options. The survey’s intent was to test ideas about solutions. The questions were created by CodeBlueNow! with the help of The Metropolitan Group, a public will building firm in Oregon and Washington, DC, and with participation from the League of Women Voters–Oregon, the National Coalition on Health Care, NW Health Foundation, and the Forum Foundation, among others.

The survey results presented here include: online survey respondents (n=4640), and Washington state (n=600) and Iowa (n=601) respondents interviewed by phone by the Gilmore Research Group, Seattle, WA. The findings from the Gilmore Research Group yield statistically valid data from two separate phone surveys in Iowa and Washington and have a 3-4% +/- margin of error and a 95% confidence rate. **The Declaration points emerged from the 2003 Build a Better Health System contest. These points are now validated by research.**

#### **Other Sources Noted**

- ABC News/Kaiser Family Foundation/USA Today Health Care in America Survey (conducted September 7-12, 2006)
- S. R. Collins and J. L. Kriss, *The Public’s Views on Health Care Reform in the 2008 Presidential Election*, The Commonwealth Fund, January 2008
- C. Schoen, S. K. H. How, I. Weinbaum, J. E. Craig, Jr., and K. Davis, *Public Views on Shaping the Future of the U.S. Health System*, The Commonwealth Fund, August 2006
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