

WE CARE *for* CALIFORNIA

A coalition to promote health care access, quality and affordability for all Californians

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Healthcare Coalition Responds to Budget Deal Passed Today by State Legislature

*We Care for California Says Budget Plan is Important
First Step to Fully Funding Medi-Cal*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – A coalition of California’s leading healthcare organizations described the budget passed today by state legislators as an important step toward fully funding Medi-Cal, the program that provides medical care to millions of children, seniors and people with disabilities in California.

“The *We Care for California* coalition would like to thank legislative leaders for taking this important first step toward fully funding Medi-Cal,” said Luther F. Cobb, M.D., president of the California Medical Association (CMA). “Increased funding for the Medi-Cal program will improve patient access to quality health care and ensure our communities are receiving the preventative treatments they need to stay healthy.”

In 2011, the Legislature cut Medi-Cal reimbursement rates to doctors and other healthcare providers by 10 percent. Under the Legislature’s new budget, doctors would see those rates restored by half beginning April 1, 2016. The budget also includes a repeal of \$12 million from the AB 97 “clawback” for hospital-based, skilled-nursing facilities for the coming fiscal year. These budget actions are not new commitments to improve funding, but rather are partial restorations of previous payment cuts.

“The relief provided by this budget for the hospital-based nursing facilities, many of which are located in rural parts of the state, will help ensure that these facilities remain open for the current year and are able to continue to provide care to their communities,” said C. Duane Dauner, President/CEO of the California Hospital Association.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, California currently ranks 48th in the nation in how much it pays doctors and other healthcare providers for treating Medi-Cal patients.

“This year, the *We Care for California* coalition elevated the underfunding of Medi-Cal to one of the top issues in California and we are united and committed to fully funding healthcare for children, moms, seniors and the disabled,” said Dave Regan, president of SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW).

Earlier this month, thousands of people from across the state came to Sacramento in an effort to raise awareness about the importance of fully funding Medi-Cal. Doctors, nurses, dentists, health care workers, community clinic representatives and patients joined with the *We Care for California* coalition for the June 2 event.

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The We Care for California coalition supports the goal that California should be the nation's healthcare leader in access, quality and affordability. The coalition includes: California Primary Care Association, Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield of California, California Association of Physician Groups, California Dental Association, California Hospital Association, California Medical Association, Dignity Health, Health Net, Kaiser Permanente, Molina Healthcare, and Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers West.

