



Principles of Health Care Reform

WomenHeart will work with members of Congress and the administration to protect and preserve access to health care for women living with heart disease. We believe the following principles to be essential for any health care reform proposal enacted and will use them to determine WomenHeart's advocacy position on all health care reform legislation.

Key Concepts

- Access to health care coverage- an insurance card, plus portability, without restrictions for existing or preexisting conditions and strong antidiscrimination language
- Access to health care- primary, specialty, subspecialty, and public health care for women with heart disease
- Access to diagnostic testing, with the full range of appropriate options
- Access to appropriate treatment, follow up and rehabilitative services including equal access to drugs and devices without gender barriers
- Appropriate quality of care, based on research that includes women in order to determine sex and gender differences in evolution, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease
- Broad-based public health infrastructure and programs.
- Affordability of premiums, copayments and deductibles

Principles

Health insurance coverage must be available, without regard to existing or pre-existing conditions, so that all women will have the opportunity to seek medical treatment as needed.

Benefit packages must include preventive care, emergency care, appropriate diagnostic procedures, risk modification programs and heart rehabilitative services so that all women will have access to evidenced based treatment.

Benefit packages must include access to the full range of cardiovascular medicines, medical devices, and diagnostic procedures as appropriate for each woman's condition.

Electronic medical records and personal health records should be incorporated into health plans with utmost care to guard confidentiality and privacy.

Results for studies and clinical trials on devices, medications and treatments should be designed, collected and reported by sex; health care providers should incorporate evidenced based sex differences in all aspects of their clinical practice and shared decision making.

Federal public health agencies, programs and activities should be expanded to fully develop an effective health infrastructure to support a healthy population.

Premiums, deductibles and copayments, and costs for prescription drugs must be affordable so that women can access the care they need without financial barriers.

Incentives should be provided for workplace benefits to promote heart disease awareness, prevention, and adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviors.