

## **Strategy notes from the Healthcare-NOW Nov. 14-15, 2009 Strategy Conference**

Suggestions that are italicized got multiple mention and/or priority attention in the final session before the conference adjourned. Note that some ideas are listed more than once because they came up in different sessions.

### **I. From Saturday evening's small group discussions and report-back**

*Keep message simple*

*Each one teach one – door to door*

Letters to Obama

Show SiCKO, Prairie Giant

*Build movement by Congressional district – keep it grassroots, independent of either party*

*Importance of Congressional district organizing – train people to do it.*

Training and prep so that we can effectively speak on the new bills coming out of Congress

Use tactics that fit with the local community

Bring disabled folks into our movement

*Union support for single payer has grown through one on one contact – one local at a time. Use same approach with churches, community organizations, etc.*

Build relationships with local media

Develop good tools for education – short videos, for example, that cover “follow the \$”, class divisions in how current health care system works, Q and A

Use examples of other government programs that work to demonstrate that Medicare for All can work, too – e.g. fire dept., post office; national parks

Link with other issues to build a broader, class-based message – health care, women's rights, education, immigration. Build greater solidarity across issues.

*Engage more youth – use social networking and other tools*

Assess where we should put our energy: Fighting Stupak? Getting Kucinich language back in? Killing the reform bill? Building the movement for the next round in Congress?

*Take on/join local organizing against hospital/primary care cuts and closings*

Targeted literature drops; targeted call-ins

*Artists' campaign – find national spokespeople*

Conduct ongoing vigils at insurance companies

## **II. From Sunday morning's panel with Rai, Guttu, Breitzman, Valenti, Bechler, Fox and Signor**

Reach out to uninsured and organizations they relate to – churches, labor centers, etc.

Build advocacy and action around the ways that single payer will affect all of us

*Pay attention to “biconceptual” messaging that may not be fact-based or “rational” but helps people pay attention to single payer – more appeal to all parts of political spectrum*

*Build movement by allying with communities fighting hospital and clinic cut-backs and closures*

*Have movement drive legislative action and not vice-versa*

*Plan for US Social Forum in Detroit in June of 2010*

*Stay true to SP, but recruit from HCAN and Obamacare, and don't work with them*

*Build your database!!*

## **III. Sunday afternoon plenary session (organized in work program categories)**

***A. Add and build new coalitions while strengthening existing ones (all methods to build local coalitions got priority status, especially working on local hospital and primary care facility closing and cut-backs)***

*Go back to all of our local organizations with the info from the conference*

*Draw in gay/trans community*

*Draw in campuses – use their energy – hold meetings on campuses*

*Local vigils*

*Support local hospital/primary care facility campaigns*

*Add a “best practices” page to our website*

*Draw self-help health groups into our movement*

*Double our membership over the next year*

*Use national and regional conference calls*

**B. Expand the diversity of our movement**

*Add artists from music, poetry, etc. Concert for our issue*

Use You Tube channel, commercials to build our movement

Reach youth – national book sale, health care stories from youth and minority communities (note Families USA story book from Tennessee)

Create HCN Youth Advisory Board

**C. Grow understanding and support for federal level single-payer**

Don't be afraid to talk to folks from Chambers of Commerce and AARP that may be disillusioned at this point

Collect new stories behind HR 3269 or whatever comes out of Congress

Force insurance industry to be transparent and report their denials

National demonstration

*One on one house parties*

Consolidate national messaging; coordinated analysis of issue and guidelines for response  
– have one place for folks to get this information

*New messages that brands our values, gives human dimension to issue, avoids “socialist” problem. “Single payer” works to some degree – may not be our best label. Perhaps something like “America’s Healthy Families Plan” (Priority—committee set up to work on this; D. Breitzman is taking the lead)*

*Healthcare is a human right must be part of the messaging; tie health reform to eliminating poverty*

*Tie in activists from various mobilization civil disobedience campaigns – they will help us all understand the importance of these tactics and that they aren’t that scary  
Continue to target insurance companies*

*Bring HCAN and Obamacare folks into the fold*

#### **D. Increase Healthcare-NOW’s national visibility**

Huffington Post, etc. work on fairer media exposure (contact: Jeanie Maloff)

More visual media

Endorse Fair Elections bills

*VOTE DOWN 3269 – support “civilized” medicine; be clear about our message in taking a position (Those present voted to take a position against HR 3269, and a large committee formed to craft the position so that our position is clear and thoughtful; Jeff M. from Healthcare-NOW staff will convene the group on-line)*

#### **E. Shift energy from national coalition building effort to grassroots coalitions**

Build groups at the Congressional district level – regional, too.

Work on electing democrats who might support single payer; make single payer key criteria for election

**F. Implement the Marilyn Clement Healthcare Justice Intern Program**