

Small Group Discussion #1:



HOW DO WE HELP MORE PEOPLE IN OHIO GET AND STAY HEALTHY?

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Ohioans spend a lot of money on health care, more than \$65 billion a year. But still, many Ohioans, even those with health insurance, lack access to affordable high quality health care. Many engage in unhealthy behaviors. For a variety of reasons, health outcomes for state residents are not what they should be. For example:

- Ohio ranks 35th in the U.S. in preventable deaths, 37th in infant mortality and 47th in breast cancer deaths.
- A high proportion of the state's residents suffer from chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension and more than a quarter are obese.

11% of Ohioans have no health insurance at all. People without insurance are more likely to delay treatment when they need it, and are more at risk from chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension. Estimates are that lack of insurance costs Ohio between \$2 and \$6 billion a year in lost productivity, as uninsured workers are sicker and miss more work. In more than 15 counties there are simply not enough doctors to serve the population. And Ohio spends less on preventive care and less on public health than many other states.

What choices are we prepared to make to deal with these problems and to help more people in Ohio get and stay healthy?

GROUP INSTRUCTIONS

1. Select a member of the group who will moderate your conversation and another who will keep track of the group's conclusions and report the results
2. Before the discussion starts, take five minutes to read the attached description of the three choices. After considering ALL of the pros and cons, check the PROS that best describe how you want to make Ohioans healthier. The pros can be from one choice or a mix of different choices. Please try to check no more than 5.
3. As a group, take 25 minutes to talk about the pros and cons of the different approaches. Identify the three pro statements your group generally agrees should be part of the future you want for Ohio health care. You can adjust the pros to reflect your group's discussion. If there is something important you want to see that is not included here, please add it.
4. At the end of your 30 minutes, the reporter should be prepared to share your group's answers to these questions:
 - Which three pros best describe the changes you think would do the most to improve the health of people in Ohio?
 - Are there any adjustments or additions you would make to those pros?

REMEMBER

- Try to follow the guidelines for dialogue.
- If you come up against a serious disagreement, note it and continue on.
- We are trying to find out how much common ground there is on which we can build, not to resolve all differences.

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THREE APPROACHES FOR BETTER HEALTH OUTCOMES IN OHIO

CHOICE #1: EXPAND HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

Health insurance will be expanded to cover as many people as possible in Ohio. People will be healthier because they will be more able to afford care when they need it. Because people will get treatment before their conditions become serious, they will require fewer emergency room visits and expensive treatments.

- Most or all Ohioans will have health insurance, either through their employer, the state or through new, more affordable insurance plans.
- Insurance companies will no longer be able to deny anyone coverage, even if they have had a serious illness or a pre-existing condition.
- The state will help low-income residents by providing coverage or subsidies (on a sliding scale) to help them purchase coverage.

CHOICE #2: INDIVIDUALS TAKE MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HEALTH

This approach will encourage healthier behaviors through incentives and education. People will be healthier because they adopt healthier lifestyles and take better care of themselves, instead of thinking about health care only when they are sick.

- People will get financial incentives to adopt healthier behaviors like losing weight or quitting smoking. Insurance companies will offer lower rates to people who take part in preventive screenings, disease management and/or wellness programs.
- Employers will offer wellness programs (such as stress management, weight loss, smoking cessation) for their employees. Employers may require their employees to participate.
- Public health education and wellness programs will be expanded for both adults and children to provide screenings and vaccinations and encourage better nutrition and physical exercise.

CHOICE #3: REORGANIZE HEALTH CARE TO A WELLNESS SYSTEM

How people get health care in Ohio will be reorganized and improved. People will be healthier because they will have a regular health care provider and will be part of a coordinated, well-managed system of care.

- Every Ohioan will choose a regular health care provider who will offer preventive care, basic treatment for illness and injury and connect patients to wellness and disease management programs. (People who don't choose a provider will be assigned to one.)
- Each Ohioan's regular health care provider will keep track of the patient's complete medical history and coordinate all needed care through specialists that are part of their larger network of providers.
- All residents will have a secure medical ID card with an electronic record of their medical history. This will make care more effective and reduce medical errors.

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CHOICE #1: EXPAND HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

PROS

- We should cover more people so they can see the doctor right away instead of waiting until they are much sicker.
- Everyone benefits when uninsured people get health coverage; people are healthier and businesses will be more productive.
- Insurers should be required to cover everyone regardless of pre-existing conditions. No one should be left out.

CONS

- Just because someone has insurance does not mean that they will actually visit the doctor or get preventive care.
- We will all have to pay higher taxes so more people can get insurance, but this will do nothing to improve health care for the rest of us.
- Some insurers will leave the state, which will reduce our choices and increase our costs.

CHOICE #2: INDIVIDUALS TAKE MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HEALTH

PROS

- People should be expected to do more to prevent and manage chronic diseases (like diabetes). This approach helps them do that.
- We should give people real incentives to get and stay healthy. People are more likely to take steps to manage their health if they get a financial benefit.
- We should make public health education a bigger priority so that healthy living becomes a more important part of the culture in Ohio.

CONS

- Many serious medical conditions are completely out of a person's control.
- People shouldn't be forced to attend health classes or be punished if they don't lose weight or quit smoking.
- Many people don't have the resources to take charge of their health. Healthy food is expensive, exercise takes time and money; "healthy lifestyles" are for the rich.

CHOICE #3: REORGANIZE TO CREATE A WELLNESS SYSTEM

PROS

- People should get most of their health care from a doctor who knows them and their history and can make sure each patient gets the right care.
- We should use Medical ID cards to better coordinate care, cut down on paperwork and reduce medical errors.
- The medical system should be organized to treat the whole person, bringing together prevention, healthier living and treatment.

CONS

- This system will place limits on which specialists people can see. People should be able to choose all their doctors.
- Medical ID cards could be used to invade people's privacy.
- There's no guarantee that people will change their behaviors just because they have a regular health care provider.