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American Health Care Congress looks to reform U.S. health care system

Health care experts to lead third-annual conference striving to identify solutions to the systemic problems underlying unaffordable health care

On **October 17**, experts dedicated to health care reform will speak and lead workshops and a panel discussion about the critical state of the American health care system, as well as the essence of a future health care system. Called the American Health Care Congress, this third-annual event takes place at **Ontario Convention Center** from **8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

Presented by Loma Linda University School of Public Health, the American Health Care Congress is designed to encourage health professionals to impact health care policies—providing drastic, yet necessary, changes in every American community and reducing the financial burdens of health care on families, businesses, and public agencies. In essence, the congress provides the brainstorming body necessary to achieve the goal of sustainable health care.

The event is open to the public. It is geared toward physicians; public health professionals, educators, and students; community-based health care organizations and foundations; members of health organization governing boards and executive staffs; small business owners; and concerned members of the general public.

“Health care reform is returning to the agenda for the American public. Past attempts at health care reform have failed because we have not clarified our values around health care,” says Dora Barilla, MPH, chair of the congress, and an instructor at Loma Linda University School of Public Health. “The American Health Care Congress is a forum to have a civil dialogue, discuss our fears, and find common ground to address the systemic problems that underlie the lack of affordable health care.”

The conference will begin with an introduction by Paul Leon, mayor of Ontario, California, who will speak about the current state of health care in his city and the progress made to improve health care at the city level. Jack Glaser, PhD, director of the Center for Healthcare Reform of the St. Joseph Health System in Orange, California, will discuss health care dilemmas on a federal level. An update on the status of health care in the Inland Empire will be given by Eric

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Frykman, MD, MPH, MBA, San Bernardino County's health officer, and Susan Harrington, MS, RD, public health director for Riverside County. Peter Harbage, MPA, president of Harbage and Associates and a national health care expert, will discuss the state of health care in California.

The event's **keynote speakers** are **Stuart Altman, PhD, and Jerre Stead**. Dr. Altman, an economist, is dean of the Heller School for Social Policy & Management and Sol C. Chaikin professor of national health policy at Brandeis University. He is chair of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation sponsored Council on Health Care Economics and Policy, a private nonpartisan group whose mission is to analyze important economic aspects of the U.S. health care system and evaluate proposed changes. He is also chair of the Health Industry Forum, which brings together diverse group leaders from across the health care field to develop solutions for critical problems facing the health care system.

Mr. Stead will direct a workshop on accomplishing and maintaining a "Business Competitive Edge in Health Care." He is the chair of Banner Alzheimer's Institute and a member on the Salk Institute board, among several other boards of directors. He has led a successful career in executive management at companies such as AT&T, Honeywell, and Ingram Micro.

A **panel discussion** on "Moving Towards Action" will demonstrate to attendants various perspectives of solving health care problems at the local, state, and national levels. Panelists include Mark Gamble, MBA, vice president of the Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC); Kathleen O'Connor, MA, president of CodeBlueNow!; Patricia Schoeni, MA, executive director of National Coalition on Health Care; and Judy Spelman, RN, experienced political advocate. Panelists will focus on the academic and contemporary practicality of health care reform issues.

Workshops will be held by premier experts in their respective health care fields. The **seven concurrent workshops** include perspectives on employer involvement, patient-centered care, public health infrastructure, and community solutions. Workshop participants will directly participate in brainstorming health reform.

For a schedule of events and biographies of the day's speakers and leaders, visit the American Health Care Congress website at <www.americanhealthcarecongress.org>.

About the American Health Care Congress

The American Health Care Congress is presented by the LLU School of Public Health. It is supported by CodeBlueNow!, National Coalition on Health Care, Loma Linda University Medical Center, San Antonio Community Hospital, St. Joseph Health System, San Bernardino County Department of Public Health, Community Hospital of San Bernardino, First 5 San Bernardino, Inland Empire Health Plan, the Latino Health Collaborative, and the Lewis Group of Companies. The event's signature sponsor is the Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA).

Registration

Registration for the American Health Care Congress is \$45 until September 25, and \$60 thereafter. Seniors and students may register for \$25 until September 25, and \$35 thereafter. The professional rate is \$95 until September 25, and \$110 thereafter. Registration is available by telephone (credit card only) by calling (909) 558-4595 or online at <www.americanhealthcarecongress.org>.

Continuing education credit is available for health educators, physicians, and registered nurses.

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For more information, to schedule an interview, or to secure a press pass for the congress, please contact Heather Reifsnyder at (909) 558-1000, ext. 42932, or at <hreifsnyder@llu.edu>.