

Health Care for the Homeless Mobilizer

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council

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Striving for Inclusion The 2008 HCH Policy Symposium

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council invites you to participate in the policy-oriented events of the 2008 National HCH Conference and Policy Symposium, themed *Striving for Inclusion: Health Care, Housing and Rights for All*. The Policy Symposium sessions described below will take place in Phoenix, Arizona, on June 11-14. Those who will be unable to join us in the heat of late spring in Arizona are invited to find materials for the various sessions at www.nhchc.org.

Everybody “In” and Nobody “Out”

The National HCH Council works to end and prevent homelessness both through improving the delivery of health-related services and by advocating for fundamental policy reform that promotes the universal rights to comprehensive health care, affordable housing, and a livable income. During this year’s Symposium, participants will explore how to achieve greater inclusion by adopting various public policies, including the following National Council priorities:

- **H.R. 676**, federal legislation to honor the human right to health care by providing comprehensive coverage to everybody in the United States through a “single payer” financing mechanism.
- **The National Affordable Housing Trust Fund** to actualize the right to housing by creating 1.5 million residential units over the next ten years targeted to low-income residents.
- **Reauthorization of the Consolidated Health Center Program**, including Health Care for the Homeless funding, to maintain and expand the health care safety net in order to provide uninsured people with the care they rightly deserve.

The National Council’s analysis of a broad set of issues that are crucial to ending and preventing homelessness is articulated in our 2008 Policy Statements, available in hard copy at the National HCH Conference and Policy Symposium and online at www.nhchc.org. (Watch for more information in a forthcoming edition of the *HCH Mobilizer*.)

Symposium Events

Plenary: On Thursday morning, June 12, Donna Smith will deliver the annual *Susan L. Neibacher Address*: “The Experience of Exclusion.” Ms. Smith became homeless following a personal health care crisis that was featured in last year’s Michael Moore documentary, *SiCKO*. She has since become a powerful voice in the health care debate and has traveled the country to advocate for

single payer health care reform. Also during the Symposium Plenary, the National Consumer Advisory Board will present the *Ellen Daily Consumer Advocate Award* to Randle Loeb of Denver and Gary Cobb of Portland, Oregon recognizing the exceptional advocacy work of these two individuals.

Symposium Workshops: The following policy & advocacy-oriented Symposium workshops occur throughout the conference:

- ***Single Payer Health Care for the Homeless—and Everyone*** examines the health care crisis in America and arms advocates with the information necessary to implement the “single payer” solution.
- ***Down & Out: The Affordable Housing Crisis in America*** explores the relationship between contemporary homelessness and the lack of affordable housing and updates participants on efforts to enact the National Housing Trust Fund.
- ***How to Integrate Services and Advocacy at your Organization*** provides specific tools for integrating public policy advocacy work into the structure of HCH projects and other organizations.
- ***Undocumented Homelessness: Health and Housing on the Border*** evaluates immigration policy and explores its impact upon people experiencing homelessness.
- ***It’s Criminal: Contemporary Homelessness and the Erosion of Civil Rights*** assesses the trend of “criminalizing” homelessness and outlines the response of local communities to anti-homelessness laws.
- ***Disability Policy Advocacy: Strategic Planning*** explores concrete ways to eliminate barriers to federal disability benefits (SSI/SSDI) for homeless persons.

Film and Video Festival: Last year, America’s health care crisis hit the big screen with the release of the documentary *SiCKO* by director Michael Moore. This sharp-edged and witty film traverses the rocky terrain of America’s broken health care system and the public and corporate interests that allow it to endure. Compelling footage features the impossible choices made by uninsured Americans, the fatal consequences of denying necessary services, a drastically inappropriate hospital discharge into homelessness, and the health care systems of other nations. Conference and Symposium attendees can watch *SiCKO* on Wednesday and Thursday at 8:00 PM, and a variety of other films and videos on Friday at 8:00 PM.

ACTION:

- **Register for the 2008 National Health Care for the Homeless Conference and Policy Symposium** at www.nhchc.org. Symposium activities, offered throughout the conference, are listed in the program. Materials relating to the various sessions will be posted on-line before, during and after the meetings.
- **Read the 2008 Health Care for the Homeless Policy Statements** or more about the concept of Inclusion at www.nhchc.org.
- **For more information** contact the National Council’s Health Policy Organizer, Adrienne Breidenstine, at abreidenstine@hchmd.org or call 443-703-1337.

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