Dear Health Care For All Members and Supporters:

It's happening again.

National health reform – the big fix – is front and center on our nation's policy agenda. Once again, Massachusetts is helping lead the way. We are generating key ideas to solve problems facing the nation's 47 million uninsured. It's more than that – we are generating the innovations, the passion, and the commitment needed to make real change.

The real action won't start until January 2009 when a new President and Congress take charge. But it's coming. Let's hope we've learned our lessons and this time we'll win.

Thank you for your commitment to health care justice. And thank you for supporting one of Massachusetts’ leading organizations to advance health care justice – Health Care For All (HCFA). We do a lot, every day. And everything we do depends on your support. Health Care For All does three things – and we try to do them as well as they can be done.

First, we advocate for public policies to provide quality, affordable, culturally competent care for everyone. We do this by working with hundreds of partner organizations and thousands of individuals. We do this through Affordable Care Today, the Oral Health Advocacy Task Force, the Children's Mental Health Campaign and the Children's Health Access Coalition, the Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Action Network, our eHealth Consumer Network, and our Consumer Health Quality Council.

Second, we run programs to help individual consumers get access to health insurance and health services. This includes our HelpLine and our Outreach and Enrollment teams. This also includes our Watch Your Mouth education campaign. Soon it will involve new initiatives to help empower consumers to take better control of their own health.

Third, we communicate to inform everyone about health care issues and developments that matter. We do this through our website, our email alerts, A Healthy Blog, our newsletters, and this report.

We do our work as part of a one-of-a-kind collaborative of organizations at 30 Winter Street in downtown Boston, including: Commonwealth Care Alliance, Community Catalyst, Health Law Advocates, the Public Policy Institute, and Real Benefits.

Every day, we confront the toughest challenges facing our health system – the challenges of affordable coverage, racial and ethnic health disparities, unacceptable quality, poor oral health, ineffective mental health – especially for children, and much more.

Sincerely,

Chip Joffe-Halpern, President

John E. McDonough, Executive Director
Mission Statement

Health Care For All is one of the nation’s leading state-based, non-profit consumer health care advocacy organizations. Health Care For All seeks to create a consumer-centered health care system that provides comprehensive, affordable, accessible, culturally competent, high quality care and consumer education for everyone, especially the most vulnerable. We work to achieve this as leaders in public policy, advocacy, education and service to consumers in Massachusetts.

“Health Care For All truly represents the consumer and brings that voice to the table in all aspects of health reform. Their on-going efforts as Chapter 58 is implemented, and in tackling issues like hospital-acquired infection rates and “never” events are bringing attention to cutting-edge health care issues. The Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation supports their work since it translates to an improved health care system for all of us.”

Jarrett Barrios,
President of
Blue Cross
Blue Shield
Foundation,
Massachusetts

Cover:
HCFA staff member Dayanne Leal represents the organization at the Disparities Advocacy Day, organized by the Disparities Action Network.
“Thanks to Health Care For All’s HelpLine, I had access to affordable health care, which gave me the freedom to pursue nonprofit work and volunteerism without worrying about job benefits. The HelpLine simplified the Commonwealth Care application process for me, so I was able to obtain the answers and care I needed quickly and efficiently. I attribute my acceptance to graduate school in great part to the career flexibility the new legislation granted me.”

Joe Rothfarb, HelpLine Caller

“Having Commonwealth Care has been a blessing. It’s the best health insurance I’ve ever had. After I lost my job, I was paying over $400 a month for COBRA, which bled my savings dry. Now, I don’t have to pay any premiums or co-payments. I was recently hospitalized for four days, and I never saw a bill. It has been a tremendous relief.”

James Farioli, HelpLine Caller
Health Reform –
Voices for Full and Effective Implementation

Why It's Important: Massachusetts health reform is improving access for hundreds of thousands of Massachusetts residents. HCFA and our partners monitor implementation and advocate for policies that honor health reform's original intent: to improve access to comprehensive, affordable, and quality health care for everyone.

Accomplishments: Between July 2006 and October 2007, more than 200,000 individuals in Massachusetts obtained health insurance coverage, with the vast majority enrolled in the state's new subsidized insurance program, Commonwealth Care. This is health reform's most important implementation milestone.

HCFA and the Affordable Care Today (ACT!!) Coalition advocate for effective health reform on issues such as employer responsibility, essential benefits, and affordability. ACT!! collaborates with the Legislature and key state agencies to understand how these issues affect consumers. ACT!! is a state-wide coalition of community and religious organizations, labor unions, physicians, hospitals, community health centers, public health advocates, and consumers.

Additionally, the coalition monitors and advocates around policies affecting state health care programs that affect consumers' ability to access the health care system. For example, when the Division of Health Care Finance and Policy proposed significant changes to the Health Safety Net (the Uncompensated Care Pool), coalition members worked to ensure that the program remained a true health care safety net, a program of last resort that embodies economic fairness, public health protection, and social compassion.

What's Ahead: Health reform implementation is in full swing, and our work accelerates. HCFA will continue leading ACT!!, and educating the public and the Legislature on implementation successes and shortcomings.

Outreach/Enrollment and HelpLine –
Voices Informing the Community and Consumers

Why It's Important: With the passage of health reform, HCFA embarked on ensuring the best possible policy implementation.

HCFA set up our Outreach and Enrollment team in 2006 to educate and support community partners in understanding changes to the health system. The team also educates consumers on health reform by providing them with information they need to know to make the best health care access choices and enroll in programs for which they are eligible.

Our toll-free and online HelpLine directly connects us to consumers who are impacted by health reform and other health care system issues. The HelpLine provides answers to consumer questions about health care options. We also help them apply for coverage.

Accomplishments: Our Outreach and Enrollment, and HelpLine teams provide the community perspective to HCFA’s health reform policy initiatives by pointing out trends and sharing consumer stories.

HCFA Outreach and Enrollment staff have provided over 124,000 pieces of outreach materials to advocates and consumer groups for their own outreach efforts, conducted more than 80 education presentations, and participated in dozens of outreach events where they provided assistance and information to thousands of people.

In Fiscal Year 2007, HelpLine calls increased more than five fold, to 21,000 calls. The team also completed over 2,700 applications for state health care options.

What's Ahead: The Outreach and Enrollment, and HelpLine staff will continue to help individuals and families find the right coverage. The Outreach and Enrollment team will connect with populations that are more difficult to reach or convince through broader and more innovative approaches. The HelpLine looks to expand its team and language capacity; it currently answers calls in three languages, English, Spanish and Portuguese.

“Health Care For All has been a valuable collaborator with MassHealth in our Health Care Reform efforts to make sure low income citizens are informed and supported in accessing subsidized health insurance that is affordable and comprehensive. In all of the strategies we have committed to over the past year: intensified outreach to eligible, but uninsured residents; eligibility expansion to more uninsured children; and new products through Commonwealth Care - Health Care For All has been at the table with us as we face the challenges of expanding health coverage.”

Robin Callahan, Director, Waiver and SCHIP Administration, Office of Medicaid
"Health Care For All has been a godsend in our fight to secure quality, affordable health care for all the citizens of our Commonwealth. Among the many gifts that they bring to the ongoing struggle are high values, reliable expertise, and the tenacity of vision. These gifts made the difference in our colossal efforts to secure Chapter 58 and will make a difference in the enormous challenge ahead to fully implement this new law in a just and effective way."

Reverend Hurmon Hamilton, Senior Pastor, Roxbury Presbyterian Church; and President, Greater Boston Interfaith Organization
We share Health Care For All's commitment to assuring that all children have access to quality health care, and depend upon HCFA's leadership and savvy in bringing people together to work for common goals. HCFA has had a long and successful history of improving the lives of children in Massachusetts, and is recognized around the country for its child advocacy work.

Dr. James Mandel, President and Chief Executive Officer, Children's Hospital of Boston CEO
Oral Health – Speaking Up for Oral Health

Why It’s Important: Dental decay is the most common childhood infectious disease, and among the most neglected. In Massachusetts, half of all children have experienced decay by third grade. A quarter of these children are in school with untreated decay or infections requiring immediate care. Adult dental disease is associated with adverse outcomes such as increased risk for heart disease, stroke and the delivery of premature babies. Fortunately, we have solutions for what the US Surgeon General has described as the nation’s “Silent Epidemic.” HCFA and our partners are working to implement the solutions.

HCFA’s Oral Health team combines smart policy advocacy with community organizing and media. The Oral Health Advocacy Taskforce is a statewide coalition working to improve oral health by expanding access to oral health education, prevention, and treatment programs. Watch Your Mouth raises awareness of children’s oral health through media advocacy and community organizing. Both campaigns work with communities to assist members in finding local and statewide solutions.

Accomplishments: HCFA’s Oral Health team helped secure funding for the BEST (Bringing Early Education Screening and Treatment) Oral Health Program. BEST, created by Partners for a Healthier Community, expands the organization’s Springfield work to all of Hampden County. It brings oral health education, screenings, preventive measures, and referrals to children under age five in Hampden County. After the initial three year pilot project, we hope to replicate BEST across the state to reduce dental decay in children.

The team successfully advocated for increased funding for the Department of Public Health’s Office of Oral Health to continue community-based programs such as Tufts Dental Facilities Program, the Taunton Oral Health Clinic, Cape Cod Dentists Care, and the Forsyth’s Institute Center for Children’s Oral Health.

What’s Ahead: The HCFA Oral Health team continues to engage new constituents to get more people thinking about dental care. To increase access, the Taskforce supports inclusion of dental coverage in all levels of Commonwealth Care and the continuation of the BEST Oral Health Program.

Children’s Mental Health – Uniting Voices for Compassionate, Effective Care

Why it’s important: The mental health system in Massachusetts is failing our children. Although mental health needs in children are more prevalent than leukemia, diabetes, and AIDS combined, each year more than 100,000 children do not receive the care and treatment they need.

The Children’s Mental Health Campaign includes parents and families, consumers, advocates, providers, and educators who have joined together to reform the mental health care system for children — a broken and flawed system.

Accomplishments: With over 90 committed organizations, the Children’s Mental Health Campaign supports bold, broad changes to children’s mental health care to remove barriers children and families face when seeking treatment. The campaign supports comprehensive reform legislation to improve the children’s mental health system.

The campaign engages with state government, insurers, clinicians, educators, and the public to ensure that children with mental health disorders are identified early and referred to timely, appropriate treatment; that insurers pay for treatment; and that the state actively coordinates services and policy. The campaign has built momentum through public education, advocacy, and unifying families and stakeholders.

What’s Ahead: The campaign is mounting a targeted public education and advocacy effort to transform children’s mental health by engaging community organizations and their constituents, promoting state and private funding for training programs, and advocating for adoption of a school/community-based approach to mental health care.

Marylou Sudders, president and CEO of Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, speaks about the need to fix the flawed children’s mental health system at a press conference before the children’s mental health bill hearing.
Health Care Quality — Mobilizing the Consumer Voice

Why it’s important: Poor quality care is devastating – in lives lost, disabilities, and recovery costs – and it doesn’t have to happen. As consumers, we are all at risk. But consumers have had little say in efforts to improve health care quality. Until now.

In 2006, HCFA created the Consumer Health Quality Initiative to bring a new and powerful consumer voice to public conversation, legislative debates, and policy decisions regarding health care quality and patient safety.

Accomplishments: The HCFA Consumer Health Quality Council started in 2006 and has grown to over 40 active members who have been personally affected by health care quality issues and are motivated to advocate for quality improvement. Council members have sparked a movement. They continue to recruit new members and build a collective consumer voice across Massachusetts. Council members have met with legislators, policy makers, and key health care players, and have spoken at events such as the National Patient Safety Foundation’s Annual Conference and HCFA’s Annual Policy and Organizing Conference. Council members have been profiled in the media, including print, radio, television, opinion-editorials, and letters to the editor. Council members have begun a project to collect stories of health care system encounters and to share them through a variety of media.

What’s Ahead: This is only the beginning of the consumer health quality movement. The Consumer Health Quality Council is growing in membership and influence. Council members are speaking out to elected officials, policy makers, and researchers. Our recommendations provide a roadmap to our ultimate goal — real systems change.

Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities – Rallying Community Voices

Why It’s Important: Health equity is the civil rights challenge and movement of our time. Despite major achievements in the 20th Century to establish equal rights under law, glaring racial and ethnic health disparities persist. We do not know all of the reasons for disparities in health, but we know they are associated with systemic inequalities in social and physical environments, education, access to care, and unequal treatment when people receive care.

A comprehensive approach is the best hope to eliminate health disparities.

The Disparities Action Network (DAN), convened by HCFA, is the first group of its kind in the nation to join community leaders, advocates, researchers and health providers to rally around a comprehensive framework to eliminate disparities in Massachusetts.

Accomplishments: The DAN brings together 48 organizations to create a political force against health disparities. The DAN developed comprehensive legislation to create a new state Office of Health Equity to address key disparities issues.

HCFA is helping connect community-based disparities work at the local level with statewide efforts through pilot projects in Springfield and Worcester. Partners in Springfield and Worcester have hosted and facilitated community conversations, seeking to bridge community-based work on disparities and broader systems change through conversations between community members and local institutions.

What’s Ahead: Eliminating health disparities will not happen overnight. The DAN continues to create political will for change and encourages others to join.

Disparities Action Network

Health Care Cost Control – Finding a Voice, Starting the Conversation

Why it’s important: Controlling costs is essential to ensure health reform’s success. Getting control of rising health care costs is important for all Massachusetts consumers, whether they obtain coverage from public or private sources. In 2007, health insurance premiums in Massachusetts rose by double digit rates for the seventh year in a row. These unsustainable increases undermine health reform and harm everyone.

We encourage health care leaders and public officials to come together to develop a real plan and program to stem the tide of rising costs. It’s time to start this conversation. In fact, it’s overdue.

Accomplishments: HCFA helped lay the foundation for this conversation by developing a consumer-driven health care cost control agenda. We filed a legislative package of ideas and policy proposals to address inefficiencies in our health care system.

The legislation proposes a series of initiatives to increase the value of medical care by improving payment methods, enhancing transparency, promoting healthy behavior, and creating accountability. This legislation would:

• Change financial incentives to reward hospitals for preventing unnecessary readmissions and avoidable complications.
• Empower and train individuals with chronic disease to improve their health and well-being by engaging in effective behavioral self-improvement programs.
• Curb abusive pharmaceutical industry marketing practices, by banning gifts to providers, promoting evidence-based prescribing information, and outlawing the sale of prescribing information.
• Remove barriers to the expansion of the Senior Care Options (SCO) program to effectively manage care for “dual eligibles” — seniors and disabled people in Medicaid and Medicare.
• Require the Division of Insurance to hold public hearings when premium increases exceed seven percent in any year.

What’s Ahead: Our legislation is the start of a conversation, not the conclusion. We invite discussion and feedback on our suggestions and encourage others to enter this conversation.
Representative Jennifer Callahan from Sutton gives powerful testimony about her family’s experience with an infection and horrific consequences at the health care quality bill hearing.

“As someone who has experienced the impact of poor quality care through a friend, I know well the physical and emotional toll of these mistakes. Being part of the Consumer Health Quality Council has empowered me to use my voice to make certain that the consumer perspective is heard in the health care quality debate. It is also allowed me to use my voice to educate the public about the human and financial impacts of medical error, and the importance of making health care quality a priority.”

Elizabeth Pell, Consumer Health Quality Council Member
Revenues
Project Grants $2,989,533
Contracts $215,025
Events & Gifts $400,790
Membership $101,079
Miscellaneous $130,294
Total: $3,836,721

Expenses
Policy & Programs $3,141,847
Development $321,280
Administration $126,140
Total: $3,589,267

Thanks to individual donors, organizations and grantors, Health Care For All (HCFA) enjoyed a good financial year in Fiscal Year 2007. HCFA realized $3,836,721 in revenue, a 45 percent increase from the previous year. Eighty-eight percent of HCFA’s expenditures were spent in policy and programs. HCFA’s expenditure rose by 27 percent in comparison to Fiscal Year 2006, and HCFA had a positive gain in net assets of $217,453.

Much of the revenue growth resulted from an increase in project grants, which represents over three-fourths of HCFA’s revenue and an increase of 67 percent from the previous year. Similar to last year, HCFA received grants from a diverse group of 34 foundations, with the majority of grants awarded for specific programs. Individuals and organizations supported HCFA’s important work through gifts and the annual For the People: A Celebration of Health Care Leaders event, resulting in $501,869, some 13 percent of HCFA’s revenue.

HCFA continues to provide timely information about developments in the health care world through technology with our website, blog, and several e-newsletters. In Fiscal Year 2007, our website received more than one million visits, a 33 percent increase from the previous year. The organization also provides up-to-date commentary and information through the blog site, A Healthy Blog.

Information on how to support HCFA in its work is available at www.hcfama.org.
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Heidi Vincent  
Deborah Wachenheim and Leroy Wong  
Cynthia Wachenheim  
Ashley Walker  
Dr. David Walsh  
Deanna Walsh  
Karen Walsh  
Melissa Walsh  
Robert L. Walton  
Lyman Washington  
Dr. Avrom and Mrs. Ruthann Weinberg  
Sarah Weintraub  
Gretchen Weiss  
Dorothy Weitzman  
Craig Wells  
Diane Welsh  
Karen Wheeler  
David and Luciana White  
John P. Whitlock  
Jennifer A. Stone, Ph.D. and Robert Waldinger, M.D.  
Sandra Storey  
Representative Ellen Story  
Amanda Stram  
John and Mary Sullivan  
Henry Thomas, III  
Andrea Tish  
Tobacco Free Massachusetts  
Senator Warren E. Tolman  
Town of Provincetown  
Nicholas Townley  
Timothy Trask  
Thomas P. Traylor  
Lindsey Tucker  
Leslie Tuplin  
Dr. Rhonda Van Buren  
Sclaudina Vargas  
Kate W. Vaughan  
Olga Velazquez  
Raul Vicente  
Margaret Vieira  
Leo Villani  
Heidi Vincent  
Deborah Wachenheim and Leroy Wong  
Cynthia Wachenheim  
Ashley Walker  
Dr. David Walsh  
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Dorothy Weitzman  
Craig Wells  
Diane Welsh  
Karen Wheeler  
David and Luciana White  
John P. Whitlock
Michael F. Wilcox
Michael Willette
Sadie T. Wingard
Susan Winning
Marsha Wise
Karen L. Witherbee
Dr. Alan and Mrs. Elise Woodward
Theresa Woolverton
Mary Ellen Yankosky
Phil Zukas

Gifts in Honor of
Frances Anthes
Rosemarie Barker and William Schmidt
Governor Michael Dukakis
Joy and Robert Fallon
Laurie Friedman and Barbara Hume
Amory Houghton
Judith Kuriland
John E. McDonough
Suzanne Patton
Rob Restuccia
Marla E. Stein
Deb Wachenheim

In Kind Donations
Boston Celtics
Boston Duck Tours
Cathy MacPherson
Celebrities for Charity Foundation
Chef Tom Morais
DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park
Felt Boston
Improv Asylum
Johnny D’s Uptown
L’Merchie Frazier
Mohegan Sun
New England Aquarium
Our Bodies, Ourselves
Sel de la Terre
Six Flags New England
Steve Gorrie
Terroir Select Coffee
The Aquitaine Group
The Charles Hotel
The Huntington Theatre Company
Tresca
Uno Chicago Grill

Gifts in Memory of
Everett Gorrie
Mark S. Gorrie
Edmund Hanauer
Johnson Family
Salvatore Marotta
Patrice Powers
James Ray
Eli Wayne
Allen Worters

HCFA apologizes in advance for any omissions made to this annual report.

Governor Deval Patrick speaks at HCFA’s annual Policy & Organizing Conference.

30 Winter Street – Like No Place Else – 21st Century Health Advocacy in Action

Health Care For All is part of a one-of-a-kind collaborative of organizations inside and outside our offices at 30 Winter Street. Meet our amazing partners:

Health Law Advocates, HCFA’s non-profit law firm, is the only law firm in the nation affiliated with a consumer organization and dedicated solely to ensuring access to health care for Massachusetts’ most vulnerable citizens.

Community Catalyst works to strengthen the voice of consumers and communities across the United States wherever decisions are made shaping the future of our health system. Community Catalyst works in partnership with consumer and community groups around the country to promote health care justice.

RealBenefits combines innovative Web technology with outreach and advocacy to change how low income households learn about and enroll in health coverage and other public benefit programs. RealBenefits is used now in Massachusetts, Maine and Illinois.

Public Policy Institute empowers activists through policy analysis and skill-building sessions focused on messaging, campaign planning, organizing grassroots constituencies, building nontraditional coalitions and using earned and paid media strategies.

Commonwealth Care Alliance provides the best possible care, tailored to the needs of elders, especially to older residents with special health care needs across Massachusetts, by providing proven clinical strategies that improve care and manage costs, within a team-based, consumer-directed, prepaid care delivery program.