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# Center for Health Improvement

Promoting Sound Policies & Healthy Communities

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May 2010

This spring, the Center for Health Improvement (CHI) has returned to its foundational core as a health policy leader. Fifteen years ago, CHI was launched as California's first statewide, independent organization focused on health policy, and that legacy remains strong. As you will see throughout this newsletter, CHI is working hard to disseminate the latest evidence-based health policy content to help shape sound policy and affect change to improve health for children, adults and seniors.

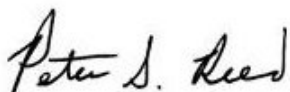
While the outcome of federal health care reform was still uncertain, in early February CHI worked with the California HealthCare Foundation to host an essential discussion of reform implications for California, and the theme was clear: no matter what happens at the federal level, there are fundamental challenges to the state's ability to care for its residents that require immediate action. Now that the Affordable Care Act is law, CHI is working to help those in the health policy community understand its meaning and implications. On [May 20](#), we will be hosting a briefing featuring CDC's Chief Policy Officer, Dr. Anne Haddix, to detail the prominent inclusion of prevention efforts in the new law and its meaning for evidence-based clinical services and community programs.

CHI will also be observing World Hepatitis Day on [May 19](#), by hosting a briefing on the importance of prevention and treatment of adult viral hepatitis. This briefing features California legislators, as well as national and state experts, reflecting on needed steps to implement the recommendations outlined in recently released reports from the California Department of Public Health and the Institute of Medicine.

Rounding out the spring health policy blitz, CHI is working with the Field Research Corporation and The California Wellness Foundation to host a briefing on [June 3](#) to release results of the latest Field health Policy Survey. This survey of over 1,500 Californians details their knowledge and perceptions of the new health reform law. Discussants include Secretary Kim Belshé, California Health and Human Services Agency, Carmela Castellano-Garcia, California Primary Care Association, Mark DiCamillo, Field Research Corporation, Gerald Kominski, UCLA School of Public Health, Sharon Levine, The Permanente Medical Group and Sandip Roy, New America Media. Gary Yates from The California Wellness Foundation will offer introductory remarks.

As the landscape of health continues to shift, I hope you will take this opportunity to celebrate CHI's recent successes and to join CHI for the important discussions that will take place in our upcoming briefings. Also, I hope you will consider lending your support to CHI by [donating](#) needed funds that will enable us to pursue our cause of promoting sound policies and healthy communities in ways that recognize health as an asset for everyday living and promote health throughout life.

Sincerely,



Peter Reed, PhD, MPH  
President and CEO



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 Informed  
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 Decisions

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## CHI Educates Policy Community on Health Reform

The Center for Health Improvement continues to inform the policy community on federal health reform and how key decisions will impact health reform in California.

Prior to health reform's passage, CHI convened experts to discuss the prospects for national health reform and its potential impact on state programs such as Medi-Cal and Healthy Families. Alan Weil, Executive Director, National Academy for State Health Policy and Secretary Kim Belshé, California Health and Human Services Agency were among the speakers. Forum coverage appeared in the [Sacramento Bee](#) and in [California Healthline](#).

Now that federal health reform has passed, CHI continues to support policymakers in identifying opportunities to improve community health. On May 20th, CHI will host a health policy forum on [Implementing Health Reform: An Emphasis on Prevention](#). Attendees will hear about national prevention priorities and timeframes. In addition, speakers will highlight a number of evidence-based prevention strategies for creating healthier communities. Representatives from successful community-based prevention programs will also share information regarding their programs, which can serve as models for future prevention activities.

On June 3rd, CHI will host a briefing to release the results of a [Field Research Group Health Policy Survey](#). The survey is the fourth in a series of statewide surveys of California registered voters conducted by The Field Poll on behalf of The California Wellness Foundation. While updating a number of trend measures about voter assessments of the state's health care system, this year's survey focuses most of its attention on California voter reactions to the nation's new health care law and its major provisions.

## California Hepatitis Alliance Invited to Cosponsor AB



2600

California Hepatitis Alliance

The California Hepatitis Alliance (CalHEP) is having a banner year for legislation related to the prevention and treatment of viral hepatitis. Four bills are currently moving through the California legislature:

- Assembly Bill 2600, introduced by Assemblymember Fiona Ma, amends medical continuing education requirements. This bill would require the Medical Board of California to consider including a course in the diagnosis and treatment of hepatitis in continuing education requirements.
- Assembly Bill 1858, authored by Assembly member Bob Blumenfield, would allow the California Department of Public Health to authorize syringe exchange services in locations where the conditions exist for the rapid spread of viral hepatitis, HIV or other potentially deadly or disabling diseases.
- Senate Bill 1029, authored by State Senator Leland Yee, would allow pharmacists statewide the discretion to sell up to 30 syringes to an adult without a prescription.
- Assembly Concurrent Resolution 141, introduced by Assemblymember Sam Blakeslee, declares May 19, 2010 to be Viral Hepatitis Awareness Day in California.

The current status of the bills can be found in the [Policy News](#) section of our website. CalHEP is excited to have been asked to cosponsor Assembly Bill 2600. Our member organizations are actively engaged in educating policymakers on viral hepatitis and the potential impacts of these bills on California communities.

An additional opportunity will come on May 19th, World Hepatitis Day, when the Center for Health Improvement hosts a health policy forum on [National and State Calls to Address Viral Hepatitis](#). This forum will provide an overview of the health and economic burdens associated with hepatitis in California, key recommendations from national and state plans and highlights from successful community programs serving individuals with hepatitis.

Membership in the CalHEP is free. Learn about the [benefits](#) and [become a member](#).

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### We're a CMAS Contractor



CHI is now a CMAS Contractor! We have established a California Multiple Schedule Award (CMAS) [contract](#) with the state. If you'd like to discuss how CHI could help you with planning, program implementation, facilitation, training, organizational development or other tasks, contact [Michelle Johnston](#) at 916-930-9216.

### Upcoming Events

We invite you to join us for the following events:

- May 19th - [National and State Calls to Address Viral Hepatitis: The Time to Act is Now](#)
- May 20th - [Implementing Health Reform: An Emphasis on Prevention](#)
- June 3rd - [Californians React to Health Reform: Field Health Policy Survey Briefing](#)

### Quick Links

- [Register for Policy Forums](#)
- [CalHEP Newsletter](#)
- [Publications](#)
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### Funding Partners

The Center for Health Improvement receives support from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, California Healthcare Foundation, Field Research Group, Gilead Sciences Inc., Merck and Company, Inc., Roche/Genentech and Vertex Pharmaceuticals.

## Popular Health Topics Among Legislative and Agency Staff

In April, as part of the California Health Policy Forum, we surveyed California legislative and agency staff regarding which health policy topics were of greatest interest to them. A [summary of the survey responses](#) is posted on our website.

The survey input helps us develop programming that meets participants' desired information needs. Our upcoming forum on [Implementing Health Reform](#) reflects the highest rated topic on the survey. Future forums and briefs may focus on other highly rated topics, such as health care payment reform, medical care for those without medical homes, health information technology and the health care safety net.



Thanks to everyone who took time to complete the survey. We appreciate your assistance in identifying the most important topics for future forums and briefs.

### Contact Information

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- ✓ **More than 750,000 Californians are infected**
- ✓ **Viral hepatitis is the leading cause of fatal liver disease**
- ✓ **Join CalHEP's fight against the epidemic**

### Spotlight on New Funding

The California Hepatitis Alliance (CalHEP) has recently received four new funding awards.

Gilead Sciences Incorporated, Merck and Company, Incorporated, Roche/Genentech and Vertex Pharmaceuticals Incorporated each awarded funding to support CalHEP. CalHEP appreciates the support of these corporations to help us reduce the scope and consequences of the hepatitis B and C epidemics. Funds provided support the work of the Alliance, including the policy agenda and the development of a comprehensive, statewide viral hepatitis online resource guide.

If you would like to support CHI's work, click on the donate button to the left or contact [Michelle Johnston](#) at 916-930-9216.



### Dr. Michael Parkinson Joins CHI Board

Michael Parkinson, MD, MPH, FACPM, is the newest addition to the [CHI Board](#).

Mike is the immediate past president of the American College of Preventive Medicine, the national medical specialty society of physicians trained in and committed to disease prevention, health promotion and systems-based approaches to improving health and health care. He maintains numerous health, healthcare delivery and financing innovation strategic partnerships with health- and health care organizations committed to improving prevention, performance and productivity. Mike formerly was Executive Vice President, Chief

Health and Medical Officer of Lumenos, a pioneer of consumer-driven health plans and a subsidiary of Wellpoint. He was responsible for the development and implementation of an integrated and incentivized health improvement strategy employing evidence-based prevention, care management, account-based benefit designs, consumer engagement and employer partnerships. A retired Air Force colonel, his final assignment was as associate director of medical programs and resources in the Office of the Surgeon General where he was responsible for policy and planning for over two million beneficiaries, 70 facilities and a four billion dollar budget. He also served as chief of preventive medicine. While assigned to the US Public Health Service, he provided oversight of federal programs in public health, geriatrics and preventive medicine training. He served on the National Advisory Committee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Care Purchasing Institute, assisting employers to purchase higher quality care. Mike was vice chair of the American Board of Preventive Medicine and a member of the Residency Review Committee. Other appointments included the Institute of Medicine Committee reviewing NASA employee health programs, and serving as faculty for the 14-cities Robert Wood Johnson Foundation "Aligning Forces for Quality" project. He currently serves on DOD's Health Board and the Advisory Board of the University of Iowa Center for Workforce Excellence. Mike also is a member of the editorial boards of the American Journal of Preventive Medicine and the American Journal of Medical Quality. He is a recipient of the Air Force Legion of Merit, Distinguished Service Award of the American College of Preventive Medicine, and Distinguished Recent Graduate Award from the Johns

Hopkins School of Public Health. He received his AB from Cornell University, MD from George Washington University, family practice training at UCLA and his MPH, preventive medicine residency and chief residency at Johns Hopkins. We are pleased that Dr. Parkinson agreed to join the [CHI Board of Directors](#) and look forward to his involvement.

