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## Improving Access to Affordable, Quality Health Care

Justus-Warren Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Task Force

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## About Us

- ▶ Care4Carolina is a statewide coalition that seeks to strengthen the economic and social wellbeing of our state by increasing access to affordable, quality health care for all North Carolinians.

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## Supporters

- ▶ American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- ▶ American Heart Association/American Stroke Association
- ▶ Cone Health Foundation
- ▶ Disability Rights NC
- ▶ Insight Human Services
- ▶ League of Women Voters of North Carolina
- ▶ March of Dimes North Carolina
- ▶ MomsRising
- ▶ National Association of Social Workers, NC Chapter
- ▶ National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- ▶ NC Academy of Family Physicians
- ▶ NC AIDS Action Network

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## Supporters

- ▶ NC Association of Local Health Directors
- ▶ NC Child
- ▶ NC Citizens for Public Health
- ▶ NC Coalition on Aging
- ▶ NC Community Health Center Association
- ▶ NC Justice Center
- ▶ NC Pediatric Society
- ▶ NC Public Health Association
- ▶ Novant Health, Inc.
- ▶ OIC Family Medical Center
- ▶ The Carolinas Center for Hospice and End of Life Care
- ▶ The North Carolina Dietetic Association



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## Increasing Access

- ▶ Care4Carolina believes the development of a **North Carolina strategy** that increases access to affordable health care will strengthen and protect economic prosperity while preserving the freedoms and opportunities that are cherished by the people and businesses of the state.



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## The Value

- ▶ Covering the uninsured means better premium value for North Carolinians with private health insurance by lowering costs for everyone.
- ▶ Providing health insurance coverage will help people gain access to the care they need which improves health outcomes.
- ▶ A healthier North Carolina workforce strengthens the economic and social well-being of the state.



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## The Issue of Access

- ▶ Without the stability of health insurance, many access needed care through emergency rooms.
- ▶ The problem is even greater for those with health conditions who don't receive regular treatment and care.
- ▶ They face potential greater complications from their conditions and higher mortality rates.



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## Access and CVD

- ▶ The uninsured with CVD experience poorer blood pressure control than their insured counterparts.
- ▶ Those who suffer a stroke experience greater neurological impairments, longer hospital stays and a 24-56% higher risk of death than the insured.
- ▶ A 12-year study of more than 7,000 Americans showed that individuals without health insurance, especially those with heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure or diabetes, experienced a dramatic improvement in health when they become eligible for Medicare coverage at age 65.





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## Insurance Gaps

- ▶ In North Carolina currently a coverage gap exists for more than 300,000 low-income individuals that have no affordable health insurance options available to them.
- ▶ Medicaid currently covers fewer than half of people in poverty.
- ▶ In NC there are nearly 12,000 low-income veterans without access to comprehensive health insurance coverage.

## The Current Gap

- ▶ **Who is in the current coverage gap?**
  - **82%** Adults with dependent children
  - **48%** People of Color
  - **53%** Females
  - **66%** In a working family



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## Rural Disparities

- ▶ Because of the demographics of the communities they serve, most rural hospitals and health clinics are heavily reliant on reimbursement from Medicare and Medicaid.
- ▶ Research from the UNC Sheps Center for Health Services states that 7 rural hospitals in North Carolina are at high risk due to financial instability.
- ▶ A major cause for the financial instability of rural hospitals is that the population they serve is both without insurance coverage and unable to pay for services.



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## Our Goal

- ▶ *Care4Carolina seeks to strengthen the economic and social wellbeing of our state by increasing access to affordable, quality health care for all North Carolinians.*



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## Key Elements

- ▶ A North Carolina Strategy should include:
- ▶ **Access:** Eliminate disparities and gaps in health care coverage so all North Carolinians can access health care.
- ▶ **Affordability:** Health care coverage and services should be affordable for all North Carolinians.
- ▶ **Accountability:** All North Carolinians should receive affordable, high quality health care. Preventive benefits should be an essential component of meaningful health care coverage.
- ▶ **Jobs:** Promote growing and diversifying North Carolina's health care workforce.



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## How to Help

- ▶ Monitor and participate in health care reform discussions.
- ▶ Attend meetings of Care4Carolina and keep Task Force members informed.
- ▶ Seek opportunities to provide expertise and input related to access to health care and cardiovascular health.



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Questions?

▶ Thank You!

▶ For more information:

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▶ Care4Carolina [www.care4carolina.com](http://www.care4carolina.com)