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News Brief

October 24, 2012

HEART, the California alliance that [America's Agenda](#) and our State allies have built to create a "smart" California health insurance exchange, continues to gain momentum. Today, the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease (PFCD) and HEART issued the joint press release, below, to announce that PFCD is joining the HEART alliance.

The strategic alliance between HEART and PFCD will enhance our joint capability to educate the California public about the importance of "smart" exchange design for fulfilling the Exchange's promise to improve patient access to high quality health care and reduce the costs Californians will bear.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug".

Doug Dority, President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark".

Mark Blum, Executive Director



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease and H.E.A.R.T. Form Strategic Alliance for a 'SMART' California Exchange

Organizations share goal for an Exchange that lowers health care costs by encouraging effective prevention and treatment of chronic disease

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. (Oct. 24, 2012)- The [Healthcare Exchange Advocacy and Responsibility Team](#) (H.E.A.R.T.) and the [Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease](#) (PFCD) today announced they have joined in a strategic alliance to build a "smart" California Health Benefits Exchange that will lower health care costs for all Californians by stemming the tide of costly chronic diseases.

"H.E.A.R.T. and PFCD share a common commitment to lowering costs and expanding access to affordable, high-quality health care for all Californians," said Mark Blum, executive director of America's Agenda: Health Care for All, on behalf of H.E.A.R.T.

"H.E.A.R.T. is enthusiastic about the breadth of expertise and experience PFCD brings to our vision for a truly transformative California Exchange," Blum said. "PFCD adds real horsepower to the efforts of California employers, unions, health care providers, patient advocates, payers and insurance plans in the HEART coalition," he continued. "Together, we are working with the California Exchange Board to achieve a California health insurance exchange that works for all California families."

"We are very excited for PFCD to partner with an alliance of leading California organizations, like H.E.A.R.T., in common recognition that cutting health care costs goes hand in hand with improving prevention and the treatment of chronic diseases," said Dr. Ken Thorpe, chairman of PFCD. "The ability to work in lockstep with an organization as active as H.E.A.R.T. is critical in maximizing the impact we can have in the fight against chronic disease."

According to Adam Loveall, president of the Sacramento Central Labor Council and H.E.A.R.T.'s chair of Advocacy and Education, more than 14 million Californians struggle with at least one chronic condition.

"The creation of California's Health Benefits Exchange gives us an historic opportunity to make a true difference in the quality and cost of care for these Californians," Loveall said. "To seize the opportunity, we need a comprehensive effort to launch a 'smart' California Exchange that promotes robust competition between health plans, enables informed consumer choices and assures that every qualified health plan offers consumers a choice of team-based, coordinated care."

Loveall added: "The evidence presented by respected sources like PFCD demonstrates conclusively that team-based coordination of care will be essential to the California Exchange's success in lowering health costs and improving care quality for all Californians."

PFCD is a national coalition of patients, providers, community organizations, business and labor groups, and health policy experts committed to raising awareness and reducing the incidence of chronic disease, which is the number one cause of death, disability and rising health care costs in the United States.

H.E.A.R.T. is a statewide alliance whose member organizations include California businesses, labor organizations, patient groups, health care providers, payers and insurance plans with a commitment to support a "smart" Health Benefits Exchange that will lower costs, improve quality and expand access to health care for all Californians.

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