



Bridges

Did You Know?

15 billion

California's Estimated Budget Deficit

2008

The year California has gone the longest without an approved budget.

2x

The number of times a child in Medi-Cal will be required to return paperwork to remain covered if the budget is passed. Currently it is required only once a year.

300,000

Estimated number of children that would lose coverage from the Healthy Families Program proposed rate increases.



California Budget:

No passed budget, what it means for us

In our *Summer 08 Bridges* newsletter we shared with you the Governor's proposed budget and the cuts to the Health and Human Services budget that would impact the programs we work with. As of the printing of this newsletter, California has yet to see a passed budget.



The State is still facing a large deficit, recently estimated at \$15 billion. So far the Senate and the Assembly leaders met with the Governor, known as the conference committee, and proposed a variation of the Governor's budget. It's an ongoing battle between raising taxes and cutting programs.

September 5, 2008 marked the moment California will have gone the longest ever without a budget. Everyday that goes by without a budget, services, that rely on certain state funding, are running their businesses without it. These include community clinics, hospitals, and other service providers that provide health care to vulnerable populations. They are put at high risk of closing their doors the longer California remains without a budget.

Of the cuts that were being proposed during the summer, not all survived the legislative process. However, there are two in particular that still remain, and if passed, will impact the work we do to help families obtain health coverage.

These are some of the cuts that are still being proposed:

- **Reinstatement of Bi-Annual Status Reports:** Children in Medi-Cal will be required to return paperwork two times per year to remain covered under the program. Adults are already required to do so, however, for children, this will be a new process.
- **Increase Premiums for the Healthy Families Program:** The family maximum for premiums would increase from \$27 to \$36 per month for families in the 151-200% FPL range.

For those families in the 201-250% FPL range, family maximum for premiums would increase from \$45 to \$51 per month.

The 100% campaign estimated that 300,000 children in California would lose coverage from these cuts alone. Given this reality, it's important to be reminded that the GGHI Network's efforts are to bridge those in need of health care to programs for which they may be eligible, and we should continue to do so, during and after budget negotiations.

The Governor made a statement in the *Fresno Bee* recently and stated that the State can go as long as November without a passed budget if it has to ensure it doesn't pass a bad budget. We can speculate what cuts we might see in the end, however, we cannot say with confidence what will remain. Stay tuned.

Sources:

- The 100% Campaign, <http://www.100percentcampaign.org/resources/index.htm>
- California Budget Project, www.cbpr.org
- The Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board Minutes, August 7, 2008, http://mrmib.ca.gov/MRMIB/Agenda_Minutes_080708/Agenda_Item_4-2008-2009_Budget_Conference_Committee_MRMIB_Issues.pdf
- Fresno Bee, http://www.fresnobeehive.com/opinion/2008/08/governor_says_hes_willing_to_wa.html



Corina Liew's and NICOS Chinese Health Coalitions' Mission:

“To enhance the health and well-being of San Francisco's Chinese community.”



Corina Liew has been serving her community as an Enrollment Specialist at NICOS Chinese Health Coalition for over a year. She is very passionate about her work and is very sensitive to the needs of her community. Corina was interviewed by Jose Aguilera, Community Outreach Specialist at San Francisco Health Plan:

Jose: Corina, could you please tell us where you are from and what brought you to San Francisco?

Corina: I was born in Hong Kong and immigrated to New York in 1979. My first job in the United States was at a Ladies' Garments Workers Union in the health benefit department. I also worked as a secretary for the Chinese Presbyterian Community Services located in New York's Chinatown, Lower East Side Manhattan. I moved to San Francisco in 1982.

I worked for four years as a health plan representative for Senior Security Health Plan. This position was a collaboration effort between Chinese Hospital and Children's Hospital. I decided to go back to school and get computer training and then began a position as a service worker for Head Start.

Jose: Can you please share NICOS Chinese Health Coalition's history?

Corina: NICOS was founded in 1985 where five of the largest health care organizations in Chinatown joined for a unified voice for the Chinese Community. The groups incorporated NICOS Chinese Health Coalition as a nonprofit agency in 1993. Today, NICOS has community partnerships of more than 30 health and human service organizations.

Jose: When did you begin your position at NICOS Chinese Health Coalition?

Corina: I began my position as an Enrollment Specialist in April of 2007. As an Enrollment Specialist I am responsible in assisting clients with new applications, annual eligibility reviews (AERs), helping community with questions and problems regarding their eligibility, and help clients interpret letters. In July of 2008, NICOS enrolled 99 community members into a public health program.

Jose: You have dedicated many years of work helping others. Can you share what inspires you to do this kind of work?

Corina: My vision has always been to help people. I see many health problems in low income populations. This is not fair in society. My role is connecting my community with services. What I enjoy is that I see positive results! I have a direct role in a person's survival in society.

Jose: What recommendations do you have for other application assistors?

Corina: We must be resourceful. We need to refer people to other community resources beyond the services our own agency offers. We must work close with other agencies and learn what they have to offer our community.

Jose: Anything else you want to share with the GGHI Network?

Corina: I want to confirm that I will work in the health field until I retire!

Update

Happy First Birthday *Healthy San Francisco!*

Regardless of whether you consider July 2008 or September 2008 the official launch date, we can officially wish *Healthy San Francisco* a happy first birthday! Let's take a look at some of the program's accomplishments and future plans.



27,800 HSF participants enrolled and growing

There is an estimated 73,000 uninsured adults in San Francisco, of which 60,000 are estimated to be eligible for *Healthy San Francisco*. To date, 27,800 San Franciscans are enrolled as participants and are taking advantage of the program's innovative approach to providing health care. This number represents 46% of the estimated number of San Franciscans who are eligible. This means we have 54% more to go, and that is just in one year! That's pretty amazing.

A strong network of HSF Application Assistors

Since the launch of the program last year, the program has trained and continues to provide support to over 100 HSF Application Assistors throughout the San Francisco area representing more than 35 different sites. HSF Assistors (who make up a large segment of the GGHI Network) are the backbone of the efforts to get so many HSF participants enrolled in such a short amount of time. Despite the growing pains experienced in the beginning, HSF Assistors moved forward, accomplishing a rate of enrollment not often seen for new public health programs. Great work!

Renewals are in full swing, and quicker to complete for Assistors

A year of *Healthy San Francisco* also means that those who enrolled last year have to renew to remain in the program. In April renewal reminders were sent to those first participants who enrolled with the programs two pilot sites in Chinatown. Later in June marked the start of the renewal process for everyone else in the program. The great news is that thanks to the program's enrollment system, One-e-App, renewals are relatively easier and faster to complete. To date, the HSF Assistors have completed 1,000 renewal applications and expect to do many more in the coming months.

HSF service network is expanding

Along with increasing enrollment figures, HSF is expanding its network of health services by adding two new medical homes, Chinese Community Health Care Association (CCHCA) and Sister Mary Philippa. Sister Mary Philippa will be open to their existing patients only. Additionally, there are new hospitals joining the network, however will be limited to specific medical homes. In all, the program is continuing to achieve its goals, cover more people and expand the network of services.

Healthy San Francisco's income limits increasing next year

Currently the income limit to be eligible for HSF is at 300% of the FPL, unless you are a confirmed City Option Employee. The program is ready to begin a new phase and expand coverage to those at or below 500% of the FPL. That's great news as some assistors had to turn some people away.

To learn more about *Healthy San Francisco*, please visit the website at www.healthysanfrancisco.org.

Did you know?

38%

The percentage of SF's estimated 73,000 of uninsured that are enrolled in HSF

125+

The number of HSF Application Assistors

27.8K

The number of HSF participants as of August 2008

1,000

The number of renewal applications completed as of August 2008



For more information about *Healthy San Francisco* visit:
www.healthysanfrancisco.org



201 Third Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103

Events Calendar

Healthy Kids Training

Thursday, September 25, 2008
9:30am – 5:00pm

San Francisco Health Plan
Civic Center Conference Room
201 3rd Street, 7th Floor, SF

For more information call
Pauline Ong at **(415) 615-4257**

Tenderloin Community Health and Safety Fair

Saturday, September 27, 2008
11:00am – 3:00pm

St. Anthony's Clinic
105 Golden Gate Avenue SF

SF Family Festival

Saturday, October 18, 2008
11:00am – 3:00pm

Yerba Buena Gardens SF

GGHI Luncheon at SFHP

Friday, October 31, 2008
11:45 – 1:30pm

201 3rd Street, 7th Floor, SF
Please RSVP to Jason Keefe at
(415) 615-4404 or
jkeefe@sfhp.org



Mark your calendar

GGHI Luncheon at SFHP

Friday October 31, 2008

11:45am-1:30pm



Welcome Aboard Pauline!

Let's welcome the newest member of our Marketing and Community Relations team at SFHP, Pauline Ong! She joins us with a wealth of experience, energy, and new ideas to help us support Application Assistors around the City to successfully enroll people into public health programs.

Pauline joined SFHP in June. One of Pauline's key roles is to be a resource on available health care options for the uninsured and also support CAAs in their efforts to successfully enroll people into health care programs. Pauline's vision is to see all people have access to health care and practice healthy living through a preventative health care approach.

Prior to joining SFHP, Pauline was a senior case manager who provided counseling and wrap around services to youth and their families in the Asian Pacific Islander community. Pauline has years of experience working with the Wellness Centers in San Francisco's Unified School District as well as the San Francisco Juvenile Justice Center.

Pauline is thrilled to recently have had two little twin boys who just turned one in August. Pauline enjoys learning and exploring new things in her life and is happy to be a part of our network to learn about other peoples' stories and experiences. Pauline sincerely welcomes your input, ideas, and suggestions to help her become a valuable resource to you and others. Pauline can be reached at **(415) 615-4257** or via email at pong@sfhp.org. We are very excited to have her aboard. **Welcome Pauline!**

