

Universal Health Care is a Women's Issue

Universal health care for everyone—men, women, and children—is important to women's health!

- 75%- 90% of all family personal health decisions are made by women

Caregiving Issues¹

- 75% of the 2.9 million family caregivers in California are women
- Caregiving responsibilities leave women more at risk for disruptions in employment and thus loss of health insurance
- Caregiving itself is often associated with increased need for both mental and physical health services

Unique Women's Health Issues²

- Women have higher rates of chronic diseases that cause limitation on activities of daily living
- 20.4% of women in San Francisco in 2001 were diagnosed with arthritis compared to 12.3% of men
- 60% of women in their senior years are dealing with hypertension or arthritis and 50% with high cholesterol
- Anxiety and depression affect nearly 25% of all women, more than twice the rate of men (11%)

Employer-Sponsored Health Care Issues³

- Women are more likely to be employed in the retail and service industries which are less likely to offer health benefits to their employers
- Women are more likely to receive health care through dependent coverage, which is often the most expensive and vulnerable part of employer-sponsored health care
- Women make 76 cents to every \$1 earned by men and are therefore less able to afford the co-pays and deductibles required of some employer-sponsored health care options
- Women of color are more likely to work in low-wage jobs and therefore less likely to be offered coverage by their employers

Underinsured Women⁴

- Underinsured women are more likely to postpone care, forgo filling of prescriptions, and delay important preventative care and screenings

¹ Scharlach A. Family Caregiving for Older Californians. Berkeley, CA: California Policy Research Center; May 2001.

² Data from the California Health Interview Survey, 2001, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, available at <http://www.chis.ucla.edu/> Women and Health Care, Kaiser Family Foundation, 2005

³ U.S Department of Labor
Insured but Not Protected, *Health Affairs*, June 14, 2005

⁴ Data from the California Health Interview Survey, 2003, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, available at <http://www.chis.ucla.edu/>

- Rates of medical bill stress among underinsured women are equal to those reported by uninsured women

Uninsured Women⁵

- 80% of uninsured women are in **working** families
- 25% of uninsured women in SF report that they are either in poor or fair health, compared with 17% of all SF women
- 14, 000 of SF's uninsured women are between the ages of 45 and 64, when they are no longer eligible for state-funded services and not yet eligible for Medicare

⁵ Data from the California Health Interview Survey, 2003, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, available at <http://www.chis.ucla.edu/>