

A Record of Success

Consumer Health First was established as a statewide, non-partisan, grassroots alliance of individuals and organizations that sought solutions and advanced reforms to promote health equity through access to comprehensive, affordable, high quality care for all Marylanders. We originally launched as the Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform in 2006. Ten years later we incorporated as a nonprofit and changed our name to reflect our focus on creating a truly consumer-centered health care system.

Over the course of our 13-year history, we built a successful state-wide and national collaborative model. With passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), we have seen our state's uninsured rate drop dramatically - from over 15 percent to just 6.1 percent in 2019. At the same time, Maryland's health care landscape has also been transformed. Consumer Health First has had a vital role in these achievements, and our work has impacted the lives of hundreds of thousands of Marylanders.



Our Campaigns

- **Cover All Kids** was launched to secure health care coverage for all children in Maryland.
 - ◆ Tens of thousands of children were newly enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program.
- **Health Care. Get It.** was launched to guide Maryland's implementation of the ACA.
 - ◆ Provided ACA-related resources for legislators, policymakers, consumer policy and advocacy organizations and the general public.
 - ◆ Advocated for a consumer-centered health benefit exchange with a core principle of health equity.
 - ◆ Educated consumers, including the LGBTQ and behavioral health communities, to help them understand the complexities of health insurance.
 - ◆ Developed resources for newly insured individuals to fully understand how to use their new health insurance.
- **Health Care. Keep It.** was launched to address efforts at the federal level to reduce or eliminate the benefits of the ACA.
 - ◆ Raised awareness of the impact of proposed changes on Maryland's successful implementation of the ACA and the advances in expanding access to health care.
- **Medicaid Supports Maryland** was launched as a platform to educate legislators, policymakers and the public on the value of the state's Medicaid program.
 - ◆ Developed a unique website with a wealth of resources, a social media campaign and a Medicaid 101 briefing book for members of the 2019 General Assembly.

Fair and Equitable Health Insurance for All

- Hosted the ***Health Care. Women of Color Get It.*** Conference.
- Published the issue brief, ***Health Equity. The Promise of Health Care Reform.***
- Provided the consumer perspective during the annual insurance rate review process to secure fair and accurate premiums.
- Advocated for a state reinsurance program to lower premiums on the individual market.
- Worked with partners to create some of the strongest network adequacy regulations in the country.
- Supported strong consumer rights and protections through legislation and advocacy, including a woman's right to have access to the full range of reproductive services.
- Promoted the concept of health literacy to support the goal of educated and engaged consumers.
- Promoted the idea of a public option to lower costs and increase consumers' choices.

Consumer Voice in Legislation and Policy

- Led the effort to establish and served on permanent standing advisory committees, with consumer representation, at the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) and Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC).
- Participated on all committees and groups that designed the health benefit exchange and delivery system transformation, including the current Total Cost of Care Model.
- Chaired the HSCRC Consumer Engagement Task Force (2015) and the MHBE State Benchmark Plan and Affordability Work Groups (2019).
- Created and coordinated consumer policy and advocacy teams to advise on the design and implementation of Maryland's multiple health care reform initiatives.
- Kept consumer policy and advocacy organizations informed through our website, weekly e-newsletter, webinars and annual symposiums.
- Represented the consumer voice at legislative and other briefings and hearings.
- Provided the consumer perspective in comments on numerous state and federal rules and regulations, including those which could negatively impact the most vulnerable of our residents.

Thank you!

Consumer Health First concluded its work as an organization in June 2019. While our work as an organization has ended, as individuals we are committed to the pursuit of a fair and equitable health care system for Maryland, and we urge others to continue to elevate the consumer voice whenever and wherever appropriate. Our work would not have been possible without the tireless efforts and advocacy of our board members and the support of our funders, individual donors, local and national organizational partners, state legislators and others.