



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HEALTH POLICY

Advancing health policy dialogue in the Upper Midwest

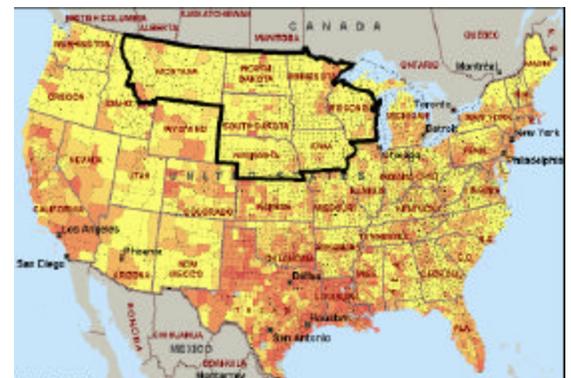
The National Institute of Health Policy (NIHP) continues to *advance health policy dialogue in the Upper Midwest* through the development and delivery of its policy-focused programs and communication efforts.

NIHP Policy Forums have become a major focus of our work. These programs are designed to convene diverse healthcare stakeholders from throughout the Upper Midwest with national leaders who are connected by a common interest in current policy issues and who benefit from sharing their perspectives with one another in a neutral environment. Many of the issues we address are stimulated by national policy activity while others are brought to our attention by regional healthcare leaders who value the neutral, collaborative forum that NIHP represents.

Current and planned programs for 2007 include:

- **The Medical Arms Race Syndrome (MARS):** To better understand *The Medical Arms Race Syndrome (MARS)*--the interplay between technological innovation, market forces, the role of government, and rising healthcare costs--the NIHP will host a dialogue series in the coming 18 months. The initiative will use the NIHP's neutral, multi-stakeholder forum to deliver a combination of educational seminars, white papers and other activities to highlight the policy barriers and opportunities imbedded in the healthcare technology revolution. The MARS initiative includes conversations with national experts – including Princeton Economist Uwe Reinhardt, PhD, Leonard Schaeffer, founding CEO of WellPoint, Inc., Jack Rowe, MD, former CEO of Aetna, and Dr. Mark McClellan, former CMS Administrator – as well as in medical and health information technology who will chart a vision for our community in concert with hospital leaders, public payers, civic leaders, physicians, ancillary health professionals, and educators.

- **The CMS 646 Quality Demonstration:** Physician and hospital leaders from 12 organizations representing seven states have formed the Innovative Care Coalition (InCC) to design their response to CMS' request for healthcare quality demonstration projects. By using the concept of the Medical Home, the coalition has seized the opportunity to redesign the healthcare system that puts providers resolutely in charge and at risk for performance outcomes.



- **Non-Profit Accountability:** On behalf of its 38 Upper Midwest member organizations, the NIHP has drafted a proposal for an 18-month initiative to articulate the value of mission-driven healthcare in our community, as well as to develop community leadership

and establish consensus policies around **community benefit** and **community accountability** for non-profit healthcare organizations.

- **2007 Annual Meeting:** To continue in our exploration of the Medical Arms Race Syndrome (MARS), we welcomed Princeton University professor, **Uwe Reinhardt, PhD**, one of the nation's leading authorities on health care economics, to speak at the NIHP Annual Meeting on **February 22, 2007**. As the third dialogue in the series, Professor Reinhardt shared his perspective on the MARS and the "value of innovation."
- **NIHP Health Policy/UST MBA Seminar:** A three-day policy "immersion" course in Washington D.C. for policy professionals from NIHP member organizations as well as UST students obtaining their MBA in Medical Group Management. The **April 29-May 1, 2007** event provided participants to discuss policy issues with, and learn from, national Congressional delegates, leaders from the Health and Human Services Agency, and other health policy experts.
- **Midwest States Health Reform Summit:** On **November 14, 2006**, the NIHP, in partnership with the University of Minnesota's SHADAC, convened leaders in healthcare, business, community, and policy from throughout the Upper Midwest to examine the traditional roles of the state and national governments, public and private sectors, and to explore recent policy initiatives implemented by states to expand health insurance coverage. Speakers included **Secretary Timothy Murphy**, from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, and **Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty**. The NIHP will continue to track and publish on the issue of universal coverage, both locally and nationally.
- **"Inspiring Health Care Innovation" Grant Program:** A partnership with Group Health Cooperative of Eau Claire's "Inspiring Healthcare Innovation" Grant program. The program is designed to improve healthcare efficiency and effectiveness in Western Wisconsin by awarding up to \$500,000 in project support grants to providers and organizations within the Group Health's network.

