

HEALTH CARE
THAT WORKS FOR ALL
AMERICANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 30, 2006

Contact:

Aimee Jasculca
310-699-7789
ajascalca@hotmail.com

C. Chic Smith
301-443-1592 office
202-689-4885 cell
csmith@ahrq.gov

Los Angeles Hosts Community Forum on National Health Care Issues

Participants' recommendations to be considered by Congress, White House

Washington, D.C. – One thousand Angelenos will have the opportunity to lend their opinions, experiences and insights to the national discussion on health care at the upcoming Los Angeles Health Care Community Meeting, scheduled for Saturday, March 4, 2006, from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The meeting is free and open to the public, but registration is requested and can be completed at www.citizenshealthcare.gov or by calling (800) 679-3684.

The Community Meeting will provide a forum for area residents from diverse backgrounds and communities to include their views and voices in the national health care debate. The Los Angeles Health Care Community Meeting will also address the current state of the U.S. health care system, including challenges related to the cost and quality of, and access to care. The meeting will feature small-group discussions, where participants will be encouraged to share their ideas and suggestions for improving the nation's health care system. These suggestions will be combined with those gathered at other regional community meetings and used to formulate recommendations to improve health care that will be presented to the President and Congress this fall.

This Los Angeles town meeting is one of the two largest in a series of approximately 30 community meetings being organized by the Citizens' Health Care Working Group. This unique meeting will combine use of the very latest technology with small group discussions.

The Working Group is a nonpartisan group authorized by the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act. The Working Group consists of 15 members—14 citizen members and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"It takes courage and vision to change the way we provide health care in our country. Millions of Americans are waiting. This is the time to join together and work for a solution," said Therese Hughes, a member of the Working Group and Government Relations and Legislative Analyst at the Venice Family Clinic, the nation's largest free clinic."

"Make your voice heard by participating in the Los Angeles Health Care Community Meeting and tell the President and Congress what health care issues are most important to you, your family and your community," said Hughes.

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The Citizens' Health Care Working Group, a nonpartisan, independent body whose members were selected by the Comptroller General of the United States, is charged with listening to the views of the American people and developing recommendations for the President and Congress to provide U.S. citizens with "Health Care that Works for All Americans." The Group's *Health Report to the American People*, found at its official web site, www.citizenshealthcare.gov, was released in October and serves as a basis to engage the American people in a dialogue on health care access, cost and quality issues. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality provides administrative support as directed by the Medicare Modernization Act.