



Bay Area and Sacramento

WOMEN + HEALTH CARE REFORM

An Outreach and Education Toolkit for Coalition Members



Prepared by:



Funded by:



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	2
About the Bay Area and Sacramento Women + Health Care Reform Coalitions	3
How to Use This Toolkit	4
Keys to Success	5
Leverage Significant Dates on the Calendar	5
Power Your Social Media Outreach	7
Use Other Online Outreach Tools.....	9
Produce Eye-Catching Print Materials	11
Create and Share Engaging Visuals and Graphics	13
Build Your Lists	15
Reach Out to Your Community	16
Give Great Presentations	17
Engage With People at Events	18
Connect With the Media	20
Resources	22
Acknowledgements	23

WELCOME

Thanks in part to the hard work and dedication of women's health advocates like you, California is leading the nation by enrolling millions of residents in new coverage options made available under the Affordable Care Act.

Yet, despite these great strides, health care experts project that two to three million Californians will remain uninsured in 2019.

As you know, many women will remain uninsured because they were explicitly left out of coverage options due to their immigration status. Some simply can't afford the coverage options they are eligible for. Others may enroll, only to lose their coverage because they aren't fully informed or prepared for what it takes to retain their coverage year after year. Still others are confused about the available options and don't know how to have their eligibility determined or when and where to enroll.

The good news is, as a trusted resource for information, you are the ideal guide to help women in your community navigate their health care options in this rapidly-changing landscape.

With support from The California Endowment, we have created this toolkit as a one-stop resource for members of the Bay Area and Sacramento Women + Health Care Reform coalitions who want to engage, educate and inspire women to sign up for coverage and take control of their health and wellness.

We look forward to continuing to work together to make the promise of health care reform a reality for Bay Area and Sacramento women.



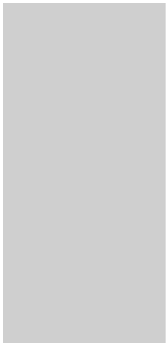
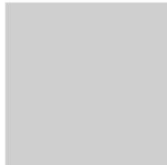
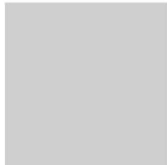
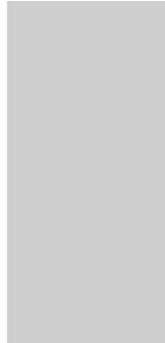
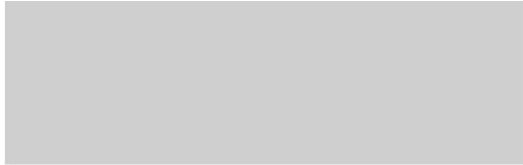
ABOUT THE BAY AREA AND SACRAMENTO WOMEN + HEALTH CARE REFORM COALITIONS

Thanks to the generous support of The California Endowment, California Family Health Council (CFHC) convenes the Bay Area and Sacramento Women + Health Care Reform coalitions.

Members of the Women + Health Care Reform coalitions collaborate to ensure that women’s health is recognized, prioritized, protected and expanded as our health care system continues to evolve as a result of California’s implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act.

The coalitions include a diverse group of providers, advocates, community-based organizations and policy makers interested in advancing women’s access to health care.

Coalition members develop and advance a shared policy agenda, partner to inform women in the communities they serve about new health coverage options, and engage women in efforts to ensure they have affordable and timely access to the quality health care services they need and deserve.



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Women throughout the Bay Area and Sacramento regions must have timely access to comprehensive, affordable and quality health care from local providers that they know and trust. Making this vision a reality for women in the Bay Area and Sacramento regions and throughout the state will take ongoing engagement and education for years to come.

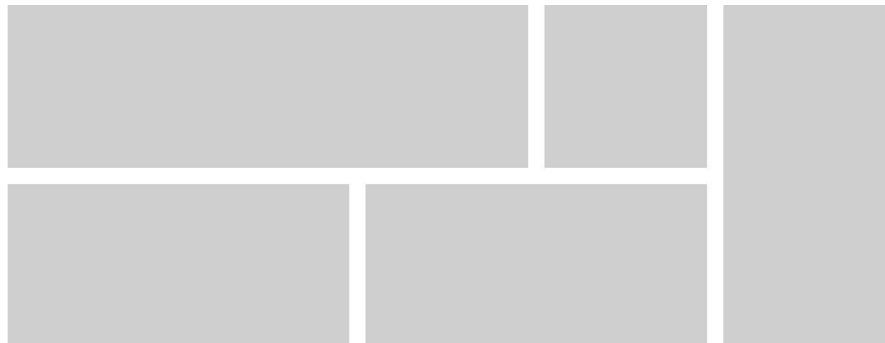
We know how difficult it is to maintain meaningful advocacy, outreach and enrollment efforts year-round in a constantly changing health care landscape. That's why we developed this toolkit for Bay Area and Sacramento Women + Health Care Reform coalition members.

Inside, you'll find practical tips, resources and best practices created to help you do what you do even better. This toolkit is designed to be integrated into your existing outreach and enrollment efforts and work plans. While the focus of the toolkit is to help you reach women with messages about health coverage and access, many of the best practices can apply to almost any advocacy or education campaign. The tips and resources can also be repurposed as components of staff and volunteer training. If you find this toolkit useful in your own work, we encourage you to share it with colleagues.

When it comes to knowing your organization's strengths and the audiences you can reach, you are the definitive expert. You have the option to:

- + **Lead** by planning an outreach or education activity or applying best practices.
- + **Participate** by actively supporting another organization's outreach and education activity or participating in a collective best practice.
- + **Share** by bringing greater attention to the work of coalition members and by simply forwarding on information and resources that come your way.

Ready? Let's make things happen for Bay Area and Sacramento women and for women and families across California.



KEYS TO SUCCESS

The following strategies offer a variety of ways you can to engage, educate and guide women into coverage and care. These tips and best practices can also help you reach and influence decision makers who can prioritize, expand and protect health care reform at the local and state levels.

Leverage Significant Dates on the Calendar

By connecting your outreach and education work to “hooks” – noteworthy events, milestones, cultural moments, news items, holidays and other significant dates that matter to your audiences – you can strategically amplify the reach of your messages and your efforts.

Some of these dates change from year to year, and some can be altered by new legislation. Confirm the dates with the relevant hosting organization. Any specific dates provided below refer to dates on the 2015 calendar.

These are only a sample of the many events that happen throughout the year that can be leveraged to raise awareness among women about health coverage and care.

January

	Cervical Health Awareness Month
	National Birth Defects Prevention Month
1	New Year’s resolutions
1	2015 ACA health care coverage begins for those who enrolled 11/14–12/15/2014
22	Anniversary of Roe v. Wade

March

	Women’s History Month
1	2015 ACA health care coverage begins for those who enrolled 1/16–2/15/2015
8	International Women’s Day
10	National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
23	5th anniversary of the ACA being signed into law

May

10	Mother’s Day / Mama’s Day
10-16	National Women’s Health Week
11	National Women’s Checkup Day

February

	American Heart Month
1	2015 ACA health care coverage begins for those who enrolled 12/16/2014–1/15/2015
14	Valentine’s Day
14	One Billion Rising
15	End of 2015 ACA Open Enrollment

April

	Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month
	STI/STD Awareness Month
6-12	National Public Health Week
19-25	National Infertility Awareness Week

June

	LGBT Pride Month
TBD	End of California state budget cycle
28	Anniversary of the Supreme Court upholding the constitutionality of the ACA in 2012

July

- 1 California state fiscal year begins
- 28 [World Hepatitis Day](#)

September

- [Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month](#)
- 13 [National Grandparent's Day](#)
- 30 [National Women's Health and Fitness Day](#)

November

- [American Diabetes Month](#)
- [National Family Caregivers Month](#)
- 3 Election Day
- TBD [LARC Awareness Week](#)

August

- [National Breastfeeding Month](#)
- [National Immunization Awareness Month](#)
- 9-15 [National Health Center Week](#)
- 26 [Women's Equality Day](#)

October

- [Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)
- [Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#)
- [Let's Talk Month](#)
- 15 beginning of 2016 Open Enrollment (tentative)

December

- 1 [World AIDS Day](#)
- TBD [Universal Health Coverage Day](#)

SOURCES FOR CALENDAR HOOKS

Here are health- and policy-related event calendars where you can find additional timely and relevant hooks to leverage in your outreach and education efforts.

- California Department of Health Care Services' [calendar of events](#)
- California State [legislative calendar](#)
- Center for Disease Control (CDC)'s [women's health observances](#)
- close the gap CA's [events calendar](#)
- The STD Project's [annual sexual health and STD awareness months and days](#)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' [2015 national health observances](#)
- U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals' [calendar](#)



Power Your Social Media Outreach

Use social media strategically and your organization can motivate more women to take action to improve their health and sign up for coverage. You can also leverage social media activities to influence the opinions of decision makers.

Best Practices

Social media is most effective when it's used for conversation, not as a tool for one-way broadcasts. Here are best practices for cultivating conversations and increasing awareness through social media platforms:

- + **Share relevant, quality content** to inspire, connect and motivate your followers.
- + **Mix it up**, sharing both your original content and other people's content.
- + **Ask engaging questions** to kick-start conversations and keep the audience interested.
- + **Post tips and resources** that are truly helpful and relevant.
- + **Use lots of visual content** like videos and photos.
- + **Ask what people want** you to share, what questions they have and what help they need.
- + **Share questions** asked by real people and your helpful, informative answers.
- + **Feature thought leaders** who can enlighten and inspire your audience.
- + **Showcase real people** to humanize the cause of women's health care reform.
- + **Feature partners, supporters, decision makers and other coalition members** and tell the story of how they help women access health care options.
- + **Tag, @mention and #hashtag** to connect with organizations, conversations and users.

WHO TO FOLLOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA

These are just a few thought leaders and resources to follow to stay up to date and to discover information to share with your community.

California Department of Health Care Services

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

California Department of Managed Health Care

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [YouTube](#)

The California Endowment

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [YouTube](#) [Pinterest](#)

California Health Care Foundation

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [YouTube](#) [Pinterest](#)

Covered California

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#)

CuidadoDeSalud.gov

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

Health Access California

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [YouTube](#)

HealthCare.gov

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [YouTube](#)

healthfinder.gov

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

Kaiser Family Foundation

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

National Health Law Program (NHeLP)

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

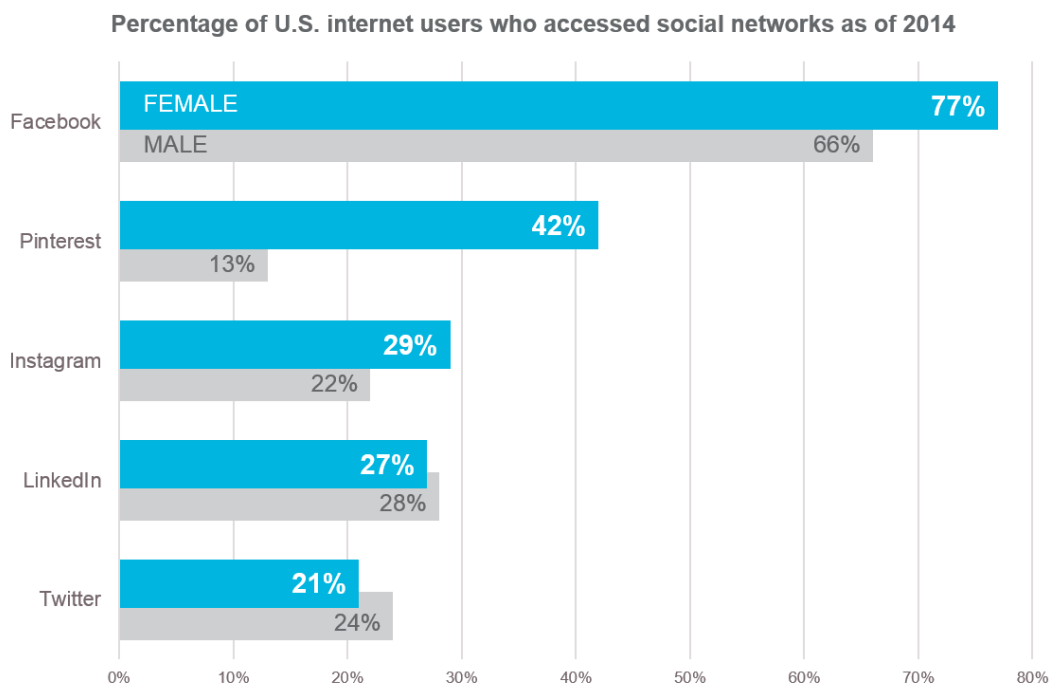
Raising Women's Voices

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

Reaching Women on Social Media

While this information may tempt you to consider using new social media channels, your organization can't be everywhere. Use this information to consider how you can maximize your ongoing social media efforts and improve upon what you already do.

Women dominate many social channels. Facebook used to be king of social media – it was the channel most people preferred and was where they spent most of their social media time. Now the tides are changing. While Facebook is still the largest social network in terms of overall users, today people are using multiple social media channels on a more regular basis.



Source: [Pew Research Center's Internet Project, September 2014](#)

Women are more active social media users than men. One-half (49%) of U.S. adult women visit social media a few times a day, versus one-third (34%) of men ([Burst Media, June 2012](#)).

Moms are heavy users of social media. 59% of moms visit social media at least a few times a day, versus 43% of women who are not moms and 34% of men ([Burst Media, June 2012](#)).

Women are more likely to use social media for news and information. While the top reasons that women use social media are staying in contact with family and friends, and for entertainment purposes, a greater percentage of women (28%) get more than half of their news from social media sources than do men. More women (37%) also use social media for “how to, information and self-help” content ([Nielsen Global Surveys 2012–2013](#)).

For more information, ideas and resources, check out [Community Tool Box](#) by the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, the CDC's [Gateway to Health Communication & Social Marketing Practice](#), and [Using Social Media to Reach Women and Girls](#) by Lauren Girardin.

Use Other Online Outreach Tools

Social media has not diminished the importance of these other online tools for advocacy and communications. Rather, these digital tools can be used alongside social media as part of your overall outreach and education efforts.

Blogs

Blogging is almost as popular as ever and can be a useful way to keep people informed, and to draw attention to a cause or story. There are two primary ways to use blogging to extend your reach, each with advantages and challenges. Here are some things to consider when you blog:

+ On your organization's blog

Pros

- Complete control over topic, content and publication date
- Update the posts as often as you need to
- Drive readers to your website, where you can provide more context and details
- Easier to promote your organization
- Full access to analytics
- Can showcase others to elevate the voice of people in your community

Cons

- Read mostly by audience you already have
- Technical problems are your problems
- Requires a lot of resources to maintain a consistent publication schedule
- Difficult to prioritize blogging against other daily or weekly demands
- Drain from frequent blogging can lead to inconsistent quality

+ On blogs run by others

Pros

- Potential to reach a completely new, larger audience
- Technical problems are solved by someone else
- Blog when you have the capacity
- Blogging only when it's important can result in more attention and higher quality
- Can raise the profile of your organization and issue through a broader platform

Cons

- May need to pitch multiple blogs to get one yes
- Editors have final say over topic, content, and when and if it's published
- Little or no insight into audience, analytics and true reach
- Limited ability to promote your organization
- Sends traffic to someone else's site

For more information, ideas and resources, check out "[Blogging for Advocacy](#)" by Stefanie Reeves for CQ Roll Call and "[Blog for A Cause!](#)" by Mary Joyce.

Action Alerts and Policy Updates

Send timely action alerts and policy updates via email, text message or social media to inspire your audiences to take action and to build your list to support future outreach efforts.

Depending on the type of alerts you want to send and the audience you want to reach, you can use a listserv or discussion list tool (such as [Google Groups](#) or [Facebook Groups](#)), email software (such as [MailChimp](#) or [VerticalResponse](#)), text messaging services (such as [Mobile Commons](#) or [SnapChat](#)) or a platform with more robust nonprofit advocacy features (such as [Salsa](#) or [VoterVoice](#)).

For more information, ideas and resources, check out "[Tips for Writing Effective Action Alerts](#)" by the National Council of Jewish Women and "[Text Messaging for Grassroots Community Organizing](#)" by Jordan Ramos for Social Source Commons Blog.

Email and e-Newsletters

How audiences consume and act on email and e-newsletters has changed as more and more content competes for people's attention online and in their inbox. Connecting with people through email can help bring them up to date, deliver important calls to action, and invite them to learn more about health care reform and their coverage options. Effective outreach emails:

- + Have a clear benefit to the reader
- + Use specific, compelling subject lines
- + Are concise, well written and organized so they can be easily skimmed
- + Connect with people on a personal level
- + Are readable on computer screens, tablets and smartphones
- + Supply data and metrics that are used to improve future emails

For more information, ideas and resources, check out "[10 e-Newsletter Best Practices for Nonprofits](#)" by Nonprofit Tech for Good, "[Quick Tips for Better Nonprofit Email Newsletters](#)" by NonprofitMarketingGuide.com, and "[Get More People to Open Your Nonprofit's Email Newsletter](#)" by Wired Impact.

Petitions

Petitions are potentially powerful strategic tools that can ignite conversation about health care reform and rally people with shared interests and values around a specific cause.

Done well, petitions will be crafted with a clear objective in mind and the best will help enact tangible, meaningful change. To avoid creating a low-value, low-results petition that is little more than "[clicktivism](#)," here are tips for creating effective petitions:

- + **Goal:** Hone in on one very specific issue and outcome that the petition can support.
- + **Decision maker(s):** Identify who may be swayed by a petition who has power over the issue.
- + **Audience:** Determine who can have influence over the decision maker's opinions and actions.
- + **Follow-through:** During the petition, share progress with your supporters, the media and stakeholders. Don't forget to celebrate results afterwards.
- + **Long tail:** Give petition signers a way to opt-in to your email list and continue to keep them up to date on issues related to women and health care reform and other issues for which you advocate.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out "[9 Reasons Your Nonprofit Should Use Online Petitions](#)" by Tim Forbes for PICnet blog and "[Community Tool Box](#)" by Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas.

Produce Eye-Catching Print Materials

Although digital outreach is a popular way to disseminate information, printed materials are still effective and often necessary. When used together, digital and print outreach can amplify messages, reinforce information and drive action.

Getting Started

Before getting started with print materials, you'll want to consider the following:

- + **Audience.** Choose your intended audience. Think about their habits and how they might collect, consume, retain and use information. What languages do they speak? What next step or action do you want to motivate them to take?
- + **Format.** Decide which format is best suited for that particular audience. This could be a small format like wallet cards or postcards that are easy for people to hold on to, flyers or brochures that provide more detailed information, or posters or other large formats that capture attention from a distance.
- + **Design budget.** Depending on your staff skills, you may want to hire an external copywriter or designer.
- + **Print budget.** There are print options for every budget. You may save big by using your office printer, though that can limit your options and cost you staff time. There are also affordable bulk print houses like [PsPrint](#), locally-owned community printers who offer customer service and a great deal, and specialty printers that handle complex jobs.
- + **Software.** If you will design the materials in-house, you'll need a computer design program. For simple materials, Microsoft Word might suffice, while for other materials you'll need specialized programs like Adobe Creative Suite. Before you start your design, be sure to find out the file format and specifications required by your printer.



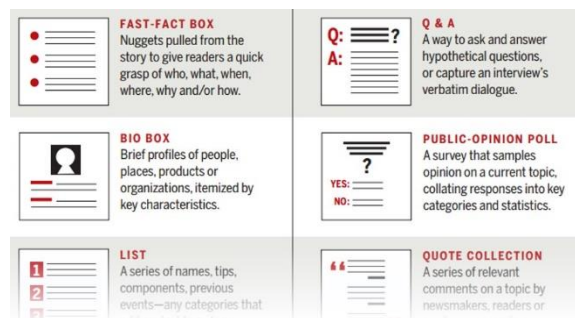
Best Practices in Design

1. Order information by importance. Use organization and design to create an information hierarchy that makes your materials inviting and easy to read. Put the most attention-grabbing information in the most prominent spot and in the largest font – this is your primary section. Then, in a secondary section, include key details that can help your audience take action or learn more. Finally, end with any minor details that you need to include in a tertiary section. These are just guidelines – information does not have to be arranged top to bottom and doesn't need to be in three sections.



2. Break information into scannable pieces. People don't like to read large blocks of text, they want to scan for specific information. Create smaller content chunks of text and keep paragraphs and sentences short. Use headings in a larger font size, bulleted and numbered lists, and sidebars and text boxes to call attention to and organize information.

3. Share information visually. It's not just the substance and importance of what you have to say, but how you say it. As an alternative to narrative text, repackage information into a more visual format. Consider photos, lists, quotes, Q&As, charts, timelines, checklists, infographics, maps and other ways of offering information that can be more accessible and appealing. Use these types of alternative story formats and you can increase your audience's comprehension and retention of the information you share.



Source: Alternative story forms by [Tim Harrower](#).

4. Include a prominent call to action. What do you want the reader to do once they've read your information? Pick one – and only one – next step and make it stand out. Write your call to action using an "active voice," make it clear and specific what the reader should do next, and convey an appropriate sense of urgency.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out [Visualizing Information for Advocacy: An Introduction to Information Design](#) by John Emerson, "[16 Copywriting Tips for Scannable Marketing Materials](#)" by Printwand, "[How Social and Mobile Media is Changing Nonprofit Print Design](#)" by Nonprofit Tech for Good, and "[Top 5 design tips for non-designers](#)" by Katherine Moffat for Non-Profit MarCommunity.

Create and Share Engaging Visuals and Graphics

The visuals and graphics you use when you share messages about women’s access to health care and coverage are important online and off, in social media and in other online communications, printed materials and presentations. By using engaging visuals and graphics, you can capture and keep the attention of your audiences.

Examples of Visual Content That Engages

Quotes



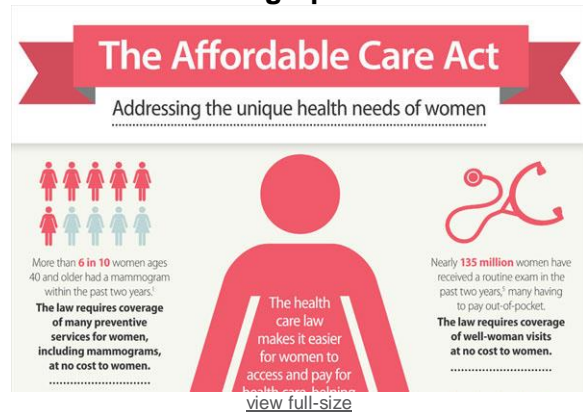
Statistics



Calls to Action



Infographics



Real Women



Memes and Other Creative Visuals



Can You Use That Image?

The following is intended for informational purposes and should not be construed as legal advice.

Just because you find something on the internet does not mean you can use it wherever and however you want. Photos, graphics, illustrations, video, music, writing and other works usually fall under a license that limits how it may be used.

If there is no indication of the license on the work, it's better to assume the work is protected by copyright. When in doubt, obtain written permission from the creator before using the work.

Copyright. When a work falls under copyright it is protected and owned by the person that created it. The copyright owner decides where and how the copyright can be used. Copyright is automatic and does not need to be registered or indicated with the word “copyright” or the © symbol. If you use an image without permission, you may be asked to pay the copyright owner for use or asked to not use the copyrighted material.

Creative Commons. When the creator of a work assigns it a Creative Commons license, they are allowing certain uses. These works will usually have a symbol or note that identifies the specific license. Learn more about [Creative Commons](#).

Public domain. Works in the public domain are free for use by anyone for any purpose without restriction. You do not need to obtain permission or pay a fee to use these works.

Government works. Works prepared by U.S. government employees as part of their official duties are not protected by copyright and fall under public domain. In most circumstances, anyone may reproduce, modify and display the work. Learn more about [U.S. government works](#).

Model releases. This is a written agreement that the person being photographed signs to protect the photographer and future publishers of the photo from liability and lawsuits over the use of that person's likeness. If you are taking original photos or using stock photography, you may need to obtain a model release. Learn more about [model releases](#).

Statements limiting use. No matter where you find an image, check for a statement that limits how you may use the image. For example, you may not be allowed to use the image to suggest the association with or endorsement of any product, service, opinion, organization or cause.

Disclaimers. When using stock images, it is a best practice to include a disclaimer. A sample disclaimer is: “The images used are for illustrative purposes only and all people depicted are models.”

For more information, ideas and resources, check out “[Photo Licensing: A Look at the Basics](#)” by DIY Photography and “[Using Digital Images](#)” by 2Learn.ca Education Society.

WHERE TO FIND AND CREATE GRAPHICS

Design your own engaging visuals or discover interesting images that can enhance your outreach materials.

Graphic design tools:
[Piktochart](#) and [Canva](#)

Free and cheap images:
[Photoshare by K4Health](#), [Flickr's Creative Commons photo explorer](#), [Foap](#), [Media Bakery](#), [Queerstock](#), [iStockphoto](#) and [more](#)

U.S. government photos:
[CDC's Public Health Image Library](#), [U.S. National Library of Medicine](#), [The Library of Congress American Memory](#) and [USA.gov](#)

Creative commons video:
[search.creativecommons.org](#), [Vimeo Creative Commons search](#) and [Internet Archive](#)

Build Your Lists

By expanding the number of people you have permission to contact, you increase your ability to rally supporters, get the word out and mobilize people in your community. During your outreach and education efforts, be sure to grow your email list, add followers on social media and connect with more and more people. Here are five tips for building your list:

- 1. Refresh your website sign up form.** Starting a new outreach effort is the perfect time to optimize your website. Review how your site collects new email subscribers and connects to your social media. Give your website visitors an enticing reason to join your email list beyond just getting a newsletter – offer them timely updates on the issues they care about. Make sure that the buttons that link to your social media are easy to find. Also, if your website has a link to a social media channel that you’ve abandoned, now’s the time to remove it.
- 2. Email signatures.** The end of your email is an easy place to include a short, specific call to action. Almost every email program allows you to create a custom email signature. Include a call to action or a link to more information. If they aren’t already included, add links where people can subscribe to your email list and organization’s social media channels.
- 3. Update your social media profiles.** We spend so much time sharing on our social channels that we can forget keep our social media profiles current. Audit your accounts to make sure your logo looks right, that your bio and profile are correct, and that links are not broken. To help people find you on social media, consider ideas like adding content about women and health care reform to your profile, incorporating issue-specific hashtags (such as #ACA and #GetCovered) in your Twitter bio, designing a social banner with visual cues related to women’s health care, and creating Pinterest boards about these issues.
- 4. Collect email addresses through events, petitions and more.** When people register for your events or sign your petitions, give them an opportunity to opt-in to your email list. Make the invitation to subscribe more appealing by offering more than a newsletter – offer something relevant to their interests such as keeping them up to date on women’s health care reform legislation. Make the opt-in choice obvious and clear on the registration form so that your organization doesn’t get flagged as a spammer later on. If you’re not the event host, collect email addresses at your event table or as you connect with the crowd.
- 5. Send quality emails.** The fastest way to lose new subscribers is to send them emails they don’t want or that are not relevant to their interests. The fastest way to get new subscribers is to send emails that people want to share with their friends, family and neighbors. If you acquire more email subscribers through your outreach and education efforts, make sure to fulfill the promise you made when they subscribed and keep them informed about changes in the health care landscape and other issues on which your organization focuses.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out “[To Get More Subscribers, Focus on the Path](#)” on NonprofitMarketingGuide.com and the [2014 M+R Benchmarks Study](#).

Reach Out to Your Community

There are almost limitless opportunities for you to reach women and decision makers with messages about health care. Think about where you already engage people in your communities that you can leverage in new ways. Also, consider kicking off new activities that that can add power to your outreach efforts.

Form Strategic Partnerships

You're already part of a key strategic partnership: the Women + Health Care Reform coalitions. By partnering with even more organizations, you can create a broader network resulting in a more robust collective strength that can yield greater positive change for women in your community and throughout California.

Working with other organizations with similar objectives increases our ability to make a difference. By coordinating our efforts with other groups in our local communities, we multiply our strength. Together, we can accomplish more ambitious goals, educate more people and decision makers, and reach a wider audience with messages about women's access to health care.

Identify groups and organizations that are interested in women's rights, health care and health insurance, social justice, the wellbeing of your local community, and related issues. Make contact with like-minded groups and determine ways you can work together to achieve common goals. For example, start small by requesting to join an upcoming meeting or event to share a bit about your work and learn more about theirs.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out [Partnerships: Frameworks for Working Together](#) by the Compassion Capital Fund and the Foundation Center's [Nonprofit Collaboration Resources](#).

Connect With Decision Makers, Electeds, Government Officials and Administrators

Interacting with your decision makers in city, county, state and federal government can be a very effective way to improve women's access to health care. These decision makers may include electeds, government officials and administrators.

By reaching out to and forming relationships with decision makers, you can educate them on the importance of expanding access to health care for women in your community, provide statistics and facts to help persuade them, and share stories of real women and families in your area.

Coalition members can – and in many cases should – take stands on policy issues at the local, state and national levels. However, remember that nonprofits with a 501(c)(3) tax status are legally prohibited from endorsing or opposing candidates that run for political office.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out the [Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest](#), "[Lobbying Guidelines for Public Charities](#)" by Independent Sector, and [Shaping the Future: A Compliance Guide for Nonprofits Influencing Public Policy in California](#) by Bolder Advocacy, an initiative of Alliance for Justice.

Give Great Presentations

To reach more people in your community, you might secure an opportunity to give a brief, informal talk or a longer presentation. Here are five tips that can help you give compelling presentations about women and health care reform or any other topic.

- 1. Know who needs to be persuaded.** Begin by understanding your audience – after all, you’re giving the presentation for their benefit and to help them become more informed about their health care options. What do they already know? What else do they need to know? Why should they care? What’s in it for them? Also, think about the barriers your audience might have that can keep them from accepting or acting on what you share – these may be emotional, physical, financial, cultural or other barriers that you’ll have to overcome.
- 2. Share something worth listening to.** Think about how you can make the information you have to share as relevant as possible to your audience and their unique life experiences and context. You’ll want to quickly convince them that what you have to say is worth their time and attention. Choose one main point for your presentation and build everything else you say to support that focus.
- 3. Practice, revise, repeat.** Practice enough so that you’re prepared and confident, but not so much that even you’re bored by what you have to say. How much you practice is a personal preference. If you’re more comfortable memorizing every word of a script, do that. If you prefer writing an outline of key points and messages, and giving a more free-form talk, that’s up to you. Whenever possible, practice enough that you don’t need to read from your notes, since doing so can keep your audience from connecting with you.
- 4. Gather your supporting materials.** Different audiences will enjoy and respond positively to different styles of presentations. Sometimes you’ll stand in front of a small room or a big crowd, and have only your body language, your facial expressions and your voice to accentuate what you have to say. Other times you’ll be asked to – or will want to – prepare PowerPoint slides or a [Prezi](#) show to reinforce your talk. Don’t forget that projecting on a screen isn’t the only way to enhance a presentation. Used thoughtfully, handouts, photos, video, props and other visual aids can help your talk be more interesting and memorable.
- 5. Rehearse in front of an audience.** Practice in front of a willing colleague or friend and get their ideas on how you can improve your presentation. If possible, get feedback from someone who is an experienced public speaker and therefore better able to share constructive criticism. Also, consider recording yourself on video so you can review your pacing, tone of voice and body language.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out [Why Bad Presentations Happen to Good Causes](#) by Andy Goodman, Garr Reynold’s blog [Presentation Zen](#), “[Prezi Presentations that Engage and Motivate](#)” by New Jersey Education Association, “[Prezi vs Powerpoint: Which is Right for You?](#)” by Kiri Rowan for udemy, “[Ten Tips for Using Props in a Presentation](#)” by Manner of Speaking, and “[10 Tips for Better Slide Decks](#)” by TEDblog.

Engage With People at Events

In-person events are often highly effective and important connection points through which you can reach members of your community. Each and every event that you attend or host is an opportunity to share information and knowledge, and get people to take action.

Host Your Own Event

You can plan an event designed to appeal to the specific women or decision makers you want to reach. This is a great option if you have the resources and budget to be the lead event planner. You can design an event that will work well for your unique community members, their culture and their needs. This might be an enrollment event, a learning event, a health fair or another event that will attract your desired audience.

You will want to determine:

- + **Who:** Decide if your organization will be the sole host or if collaborating with partners and sponsors will help the event be more successful. Then, figure out the person or team that will plan the event and the volunteers you may need.
- + **What:** Give people the right incentive to attend. Are they enticed by speakers, a class, entertainment or networking? Do they want to learn, have fun or meet their neighbors?
- + **How:** Set your budget, which may include venue rental, food and beverage, marketing, material production, audio/visual equipment, insurance and more.
- + **Where:** Choose a location that's convenient for your desired attendees. Consider proximity to public transit, parking, and childcare or space for children to play.
- + **When:** The event must fit into the schedule of your desired attendees. For example, if it's an event for college students, early weekend mornings are probably not ideal.
- + **Why:** How will you know the event is a success? What are you hoping your attendees take away from your event?

Participate in an Event

You can participate in an existing event to reach women where they already are. You could set up a booth or a table, become an official event sponsor or send out a "street team" to mingle with a crowd. Look for events already happening in your community like street fairs, music and food festivals, cultural events, college resource fairs and holiday events.

Find events that offer the most value for your time, that is, events that women in your community already attend during which they'll be receptive to learning about their health care options.

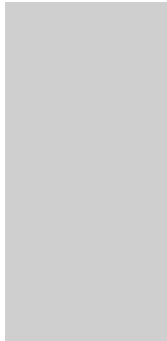
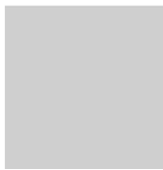
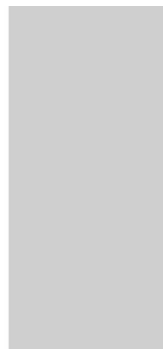
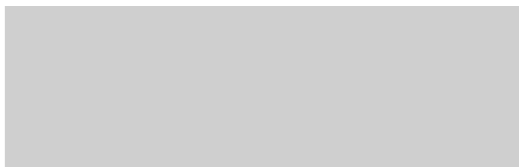
Provide Materials for Distribution at an Event

Some events will let you distribute materials without any other participation required. You can ask the event organizer if it's possible for them to include your materials in a tote bag for attendees or if there's a common table where your materials can be shared.

Best Practices for Events

- + **Event promotion.** There are many ways, both online and off-line, to promote your event. You may want to set up an online RSVP or ticketing site (check out [Meetup](#), [Evite](#) or [Eventbrite](#)), send an email invitation to your list, share the invitation via social media, distribute flyers in the community, or list the event in community newsletters, online event calendars and local blogs.
- + **Material production.** At the event, you may want to set up a display of health care information materials and/or distribute them to directly event attendees. These can be materials you create in-house or check out the [materials provided by Covered California](#).
- + **Thank yous.** Immediately following the event, ideally the day after, send thank you notes to volunteers, partners, sponsors, speakers and anyone else who helped make the event a success.
- + **Post-event communications.** If you gave attendees a way to sign up for your organization's email list, consider sending a prompt follow-up email that offers relevant and actionable information about their health care options. Use this opportunity to authentically connect with your attendees as real people, such as by sharing a memorable moment from the event. Remember, don't email people who did not explicitly opt-in to your email list – that's spam.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out [Enrollment Event Planning Guide](#) by Covered California, [Conducting Effective Enrollment Events and How to Get More Support](#) webinar by Enroll America, and [Advocacy Event Planning](#) by Arts for LA.



Connect With the Media

Even with the recent dramatic shifts in journalism and the media landscape, traditional media is still an important forum for influencing public opinion, swaying the minds of decision makers and for advancing women's health care reform.

Letters to the Editor

Writing a Letter to the Editor (LTE) of your local or regional paper can help you reach a large and attentive reader audience. These are short pieces that can be submitted by any local individual who has a timely opinion they want to share with other members of their community, most often in response to a recent article in the paper. Smaller papers are usually more likely to publish your LTE because they receive fewer submissions.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out [Community Tool Box](#) by the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, "[Tips for Writing Effective Letters to the Editor](#)" by Reclaim Democracy, and "[Writing an Effective Letter to the Editor](#)" by the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Op-Eds

An op-ed is a very timely article with a strong and often unique political, cultural or social opinion written by an individual who is an expert, leader, or other credible or noteworthy individual. Many newspapers include op-eds, which can provide a high-profile platform for sharing your ideas and recommendations about health care reform. Typically, op-eds are pitched much like regular articles, with the idea and the expert's credentials sent to the op-ed section editor.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out "[How to Write an Op-Ed Article](#)" by Duke University; "[Op-Ed and You](#)" by Trish Hall for the *New York Times*; the [DailyOpEd](#) op-ed search tool; and [The OpEd Project](#), which helps women thought leaders secure more op-eds.

Pitching Journalists and Bloggers

Even if you don't hire a PR agency or have an in-house communications team, you can become a trusted expert for journalists and bloggers who are writing about how the Affordable Care Act, health care reform, or women's health issues have impacted your local community. Research and pitch journalists using media databases like [Meltwater](#) and [Cision](#); pitch reporters directly via email, social media (especially Twitter) and services like [Muck Rack](#); and discover reporters looking for stories and issue experts via [Help A Reporter Out \(HARO\)](#).

For more information, ideas and resources, check out "[How to Pitch a Journalist on Twitter](#)" and "[The 7 Deadly Sins of Pitching Journalists and Bloggers](#)" on Muck Rack.

Press Releases

Press releases are listed last in this section for a reason: You don't necessarily need a press release to pitch a journalist and get your story covered. And, as it turns out, most of the journalists on your pitch list probably don't want your press release.

This begs the question: when might you want a press release?

You may want to issue a press release if:

- + **Your news is truly significant, interesting or noteworthy.** Your release needs to quickly grab the attention of journalists and must be something their readers will want to know. Your story must have a strong value for people outside your organization to be newsworthy.
- + **Your news is very timely.** Journalists are more likely to pay attention to releases that are connected to current events, breaking news, calendar hooks and other topics relevant at that exact moment. Pay attention to lead times—for example, print magazines typically select stories months in advance.
- + **Your story is complex, data-packed or nuanced.** Data-driven news can benefit from a well-written, focused release that offers substance and a story to bring the data to life.
- + **The release can serve as a credibility marker.** Some audiences – such as government officials, electeds, funders and certain journalists – may assess your authority, in part, by what you can show you’ve published in this format.
- + **When you have the money to distribute the release via a wire service.** This may give you a chance at broader coverage. However, remember that wire services don’t replace pitching journalists that your research indicates may be interested in your story.

For more information, ideas and resources, check out the [Creating an Earned Media Strategy: Fast Ways to Engage Local Media and Motivate Consumers](#) webinar by Enroll America, [New School Press Release Tactics](#) by Sarah Skerik, and [“Do You Still Need to Use a Press Release?”](#) by Krista Tolstedt for CoSchedule Blog.



RESOURCES

The following organizations, websites and resources offer more information about the Affordable Care Act, Covered California, health care and health insurance, women's health advocacy and more.

Stay Informed

- ACA Library acalibrary.org
- Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum apiahf.org
- Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations aapcho.org
- Covered California, English coveredca.com, Spanish coveredca.com/espanol/
- California Department of Health Care Services dhcs.ca.gov
- California Department of Managed Health Care dmhc.ca.gov
- The California Endowment calendow.org
- California Family Health Council cfhc.org
- California HealthCare Foundation's Health Reform & Public Programs Initiative chcf.org/programs/healthreform
- California Latinas for Reproductive Justice californialatinas.org
- Health Access Foundation health-access.org
- Kaiser Family Foundation kff.org
- National Health Law Program (NHeLP) healthlaw.org
- Raising Women's Voices raisingwomensvoices.net
- WE Connect weconnect.net

Information About Coverage Once Insured

- HealthCare.gov, preventative health services for women healthcare.gov/preventive-care-benefits/women/
- HealthFinder.gov, Health Care Reform: Women healthfinder.gov/healthcarereform/women.aspx
- My Health My Info myhealthmyinfo.org

Access for the Uninsured and Underinsured

- Alameda Health Consortium alamedahealthconsortium.org
- Capitol Health Network capitolhealthnetwork.org
- Contra Costa and Solano Counties Community Clinic Consortium clinicconsortium.org
- Family Impact familyimpact.org
- Family PACT familypact.org
- Medi-Cal dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/Pages/default.aspx
- Medi-Cal Access for Infants and Mothers (AIM) Program aim.ca.gov
- San Francisco Community Clinic Consortium sfccc.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit was developed in 2015 to leverage best practices being implemented by members of the Bay Area and Sacramento Women + Health Care Reform coalitions and to support local outreach and education efforts.

The toolkit was developed by [California Family Health Council](#) (CFHC), a statewide organization that champions and promotes quality sexual and reproductive health care for all, in partnership with [Lauren Girardin](#), a marketing and communications consultant, writer and trainer.

The toolkit was created thanks to the generous support of [The California Endowment](#), a private, statewide health foundation with a mission to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved individuals and communities, and to promote fundamental improvements in the health status of all Californians.

Suggested citation: California Family Health Council. Bay Area and Sacramento Women + Health Care Reform: An Outreach and Education Toolkit for Coalition Members. January 2015. www.cfhc.org.



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