

United for Single Payer – Meeting Summary – June 24th, 2009

This summary was edited into narrative style from very precise notes, thanks to Dorene Robinson. Some updates have been added regarding the web site.

48 people attended. Once again there was lots of enthusiasm and energy around the prospect of most of the Western Washington single payer forces coming together to collaborate and amplify our impact.

Again, we had Hal Stockbridge to thank for running a very tight meeting, with lots accomplished in the limited meeting time from 7- 8:55PM. Many people stayed after the meeting officially ended to continue the conversations.

Name of Coalition - The initial discussion was about the permanent name for our coalition. Most agreed with the proposal for United for Single Payer (USP).

Web Site - The USP name will be incorporated into a web site URL as www.unitedforsinglepayer.org. The Domain name (\$14.95) and server hosting (\$60) have been purchased for one year. The site should be available by direct web access via the www.unitedforsinglepayer.org address by Saturday, June 27. Meanwhile, you can access through the PNHPWW web site at: http://www.pnhpwesternwashington.org/united_for_single_payer/united_for_single_payer_index.html or by clicking on the link from the PNHPWW home page.

Discussion of logo - There was a brief discussion about the graphic for the web site home page. There was a slight majority for “The Only Cure for a Sick America,” Statue of Liberty graphic, but with adjustments to the font for better legibility, and also to try for a generally less busy look. The word “only” was removed and “Single-Payer National Health Insurance” changed to “A Single Payer National Health Plan.” **Note no hyphen.** We agreed we should stay consistent with this no hyphen in our literature.

It was suggested that the August 2003 NEJM article that described how to convert to a single payer system be posted on the website. The proposer said that she would email David with the link to the article.

Note that any web site updates have to be posted through David’s web host server, but can be done almost immediately.

Committee Reports

Fundraising Report (Ken Fabert): (posted to the website) Goal is to raise \$10K in two weeks, and \$3K at the meeting. Also we had a “matching challenge;” if we raised \$3K the challenge sponsor would kick in \$1K more. The baskets were passed. By 8:30pm, \$3000 target was raised. So with the generous matching donation of \$1000, **we reached \$4,000.** And, this was with cash and checks only, no credit cards or IOU’s!

The committee has a flyer for donation requests that will be emailed to coalition organization members.

In order to claim a tax-deduction, make checks out to the following: “WA HCP HCFA” and in the memo line note: “single payer coalition fund.” Dana Iorio agreed to handle the contributions, as he is HCFA’s Treasurer.

The point was made that we need to have a **Finance Committee** to create a budget and make spending allocations. This will be separate from the Fundraising Committee.

Goals & Priorities Report (Don Mitchell): (posted to the website) The primary goal would be to increase political feasibility of single payer. See the website for the “suggested” goals for the various committees.

1. Policy - Infuse single payer principles into any health care reform legislation

Sub-goals might include successfully including specific principles in legislation, hearings, votes in committee, votes on the floor of each house, passing legislation. This committee would also be responsible for tracking legislative proposals closely and alerting other committees when action is needed to influence the debate.

2. Grassroots Capacity - Increasing the number of supporters in our coalition, especially those we can mobilize.

Subgoals could include activities like creating forums to educate people, increasing the number of mobilizable supporters, numbers of supporters by congressional or legislative district, recruiting district leaders and teams.

3. Coalition Building - Increasing the number of single payer supporting organizations in our coalition and effectively integrating them into our activities.

4. Messaging & Media - Developing effective messages and getting them out to our supporters.

Subgoals could include getting the research on messaging language for health care reform, deciding the type of messages to advance to reach main street voters, creating a unifying core message and specific messages for various needs (i.e. to counter an attack or a threat to weaken a reform proposal). They would also include activities to get the message out like email, press briefings and press releases.

5. Lawmaker Relationships - Building relationships with decision makers and staff

It was noted that one of the committees needs to track changes in the legislation as it’s happening.

A comment was made that we need to spell out what single payer components are very clearly...

Materials & Messaging Report (Martha Koestler): (posted to the website)

Martha proposed 5 goals that could consist of:

Universal - everybody included, no exceptions

Publicly and sustainably financed - delivered through existing delivery systems

Comprehensive - all necessary medical care with one level of benefits

Portable - independent of employment status, place of residence, health status or age

Accessible - free choice of any qualified practitioner or hospital

Affordable

Other comments were to tailor messaging to communities e.g. African American, LGBT, etc. and also use of bumper stickers and yard signs. Someone thought buttons were not worthwhile, as people won't wear them.

Action Committee Report (Linda Rohan): (posted to the website)

- a. Gay Pride Parade--: Sunday June 28th
11am at 4th & Denny
wear a white t-shirt, lab coat or scrubs
bring 3 talking points and 3 friends
- b. Bit of Seattle
July 17th?
- c. City Hall—August 6th
lunchtime concert
- d. Murray/Cantwell offices
Federal Bldg Seattle
10:45am (not sure of date, 6/26?)
contact Cynthia Donaldson
- e. Shoreline Community College—Tuesday June 30th
- f. Burien Library showing: “Sick Around the World”
date/time?
- g. Friday 6/26 meeting
Capitol Hill Seattle Public Library, 5:45pm

Outreach Committee (David McLanahan): (posted to the web site)

Outreach needs to be focused on bringing more uncommitted people into the single payer corral, rather than expending our energy on health care activist groups that already have a position on health reform legislation. This means a presence at grassroots events such as the Gay Pride Parade, community festivals, as well as through forums and presentations to multi issue groups such as faith-based, union, political clubs, service organizations, etc. We have a nice opportunity with the Anne Feeney “Sing Out for Single Payer” concerts towards the end of July.

Will detail a contact list for organizations and events to target. Need to coordinate with the Action committee.

Speakers training. We have seven people willing to make presentations. Consider a speakers' training session. Coordinate with Materials and Messaging Committee.

Influencing Congress Report (Judith Shattuck):

Brought Norm Dicks on board supporting HR676

Need volunteers to help get Jay Inslee (1st District) →[Nancy Spaeth volunteered] and Adam Smith (9th District) on board too. →[Barbara Fithian volunteered]

Diana discussed need to respond to Tom Daschle comments regarding public option earlier this week. The URL www.demandinglepayer.com (as well as .net, and .org) to set up a website. She is asking for help collecting stories on “victims” harmed by lack of care/the current broken healthcare system. To help contact Diana at treetracker@comcast.net.

Congressional timeline (David Loud) (will be posted in graphic form on web site)

- July 6th – refined bills will be reintroduced (starting July 6th; after week of break) for “mark up” during the 1st half of July
- August – committees in the House and Senate will begin work trying to combine the bills that each passed into one final bill
- September – Reconciled bill will be introduced for a final vote

We agreed that with things moving very quickly in Washington, DC, that we also need to move quickly and that the next meeting should be in one week.

Next Meeting – Wednesday, July 1st, &PM - same place – Swed/CH Campus, James Tower, Room B. Will try to have conference call capability by then.