

Topics covered in the workgroup included ten year trend data for San Diego County, county and statewide efforts to cover all kids and coverage expansion opportunities under the new federal waiver. To preface the day's discussion, ITUP staff provided a 2005 data summary of San Diego County from 1996 through 2004 highlighting significant trends, accomplishments and opportunities. The 2005 Overview of the Uninsured in San Diego County and additional regional and county overviews can be viewed on our website: <http://www.itup.org/workgroup.html>.

### **San Diego County and Statewide Efforts to Cover All Kids**

In San Diego County, there are a variety of efforts to cover kids. The County Health and Human Service Agency's ACT Project seeks to identify the areas of San Diego County where coverage and enrollment opportunities are greater. In collaboration with Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP), regional conversations, which would include presentations of the data and a discussion on outreach, enrollment, and retention along with an identification of community resources available, will determine what the next steps will be in terms of using the data to target enrollment efforts in a cost-effective manner.

The San Diego Children's Health Initiative (CHI) aims to cover 90,000 uninsured children by increasing enrollment of eligible children in Medi-Cal and Healthy Families and the creation of a third product to cover those children who are not eligible for Med-Cal or Healthy Families. Despite commitments of over \$7.5 million in funding, the San Diego CHI has been unable to move forward with the creation of a third product as they are awaiting endorsement from the Board of Supervisors.

On a statewide level, The United Way is working to raise awareness of the importance of health insurance for children among business leaders through a series of face-to-face conversations. The program, Covering California's Kids, published a report on the key findings from these discussions.

The passage of the Tobacco Tax Act of 2006, which provides \$371 million annually for a statewide health insurance program for children, would also achieve the goal of covering all children under 300% of FPL. New funds will flow directly into existing local CHIs. Other counties without an existing CHI will experience some delay in implementation and funding.

### **Coverage Expansion Opportunities**

As part of the new federal Medicaid Section 1115 waiver, \$180 million is available in years three through five of the waiver for coverage expansion. In order to access the federal funds, county entities or the state must have adequate CPEs (certified public expenditures). The California

Department of Health Services has outlined guiding principles and initiated a series of stakeholder meetings to inform the design of the waiver amendment to be submitted to CMS by September 1, 2006 and the expansion program must be ready to launch on September 1, 2007.

In San Diego County, San Diegans for Health Care Coverage is pursuing a 5-year pilot program to increase insurance coverage among small employers. The program is designed as a 3-way subsidy share between employer, employee, and government for employers with uninsured workers under 300% of FPL. The subsidy will not come from the aforementioned waiver, as they believe that the San Diego safety net needs those dollars; rather, the program is looking to apply for a substate waiver. The plan is palatable to the business community and is gaining greater support from across the political spectrum.

Other counties are working on plans for the coverage initiative funds, including San Francisco, Fresno, and Orange. In San Diego, there is community support for the hospitals receiving the county's entire share of the funds. Some possible expansions of the safety net include: expand eligibility under CMS for hospital care, expand hospital-based outpatient and specialty care, and an EAPC model for primary care. There are many unresolved key issues surrounding the waiver, in San Diego and statewide:

- 1) What will the waiver amendment look like?
- 2) How will the funds be allocated: through a competitive grants process, based on need or some other system?
- 3) What qualifies as a CPE?

### **Summary of Recommendations**

Participants shared their recommendations and priorities for expanding coverage of the uninsured in San Diego County.

- 1) Simplify and improve the application and enrollment processes for public programs
- 2) Identify and implement successful retention strategies for Medi-Cal and Healthy Families
- 3) Support the local CHI and Tobacco Tax Act of 2006 to cover all kids in San Diego and statewide
- 4) Parity in funding and reimbursement rates for San Diego County health care