

This Week in Health Care Reform: May 7, 2010

With the health care reform law enacted, both state and federal regulators are moving quickly to implement reforms with fast-approaching implementation deadlines.

According to the new health care reform law and federal implementation timetable, state officials had until April 30 to decide whether to establish their own enhanced high-risk pools that meet new federal requirements or to defer to the federal government in setting up high-risk insurance pools in their states.

Additionally, Administration officials are taxed with translating the new legislation into detailed regulations and commencing implementation. Meanwhile, candidates for U.S. House and Senate seats continue to debate the legislation's merits as they approach the November elections.

As the health care reform debate continues to take shape this year, we encourage you and others to engage Members of Congress by visiting the [Health Action Network](#).

Health Care Reform

Multiple States Opt Out of High Risk Pools: As of [Monday](#), officials from 29 states and the District of Columbia agreed to help run the high-risk insurance pools, slated to go into effect by July 1. At the same time, [governors](#) from 19 other states [declined](#) participation for fear that the \$5 billion budget from the federal government would be insufficient to cover the plan until [2014](#), leaving the states to make up the [difference](#).

Early Retiree Reinsurance Program Coming Soon: On [Tuesday](#), White House officials announced plans to implement a new provision of the health care reform law slightly ahead of schedule. Beginning on [June 1](#), administration officials will provide employers \$5 billion in grants to keep early retirees on their company insurance plans. [The Early Retiree Reinsurance Program](#), part of the new health care reform law, is designed to help employers extend coverage to early retirees who are too young to qualify for Medicare. The provision had been slated to go into effect on June 21.

Oklahoma Legislature Passes Measure to Allow Health Care Lawsuit: On [Tuesday](#), lawmakers in the Oklahoma State Senate approved a [resolution](#) allowing legislators to file a lawsuit against the federal government. If signed by the state's governor, this [resolution](#) would authorize Oklahoma legislators to sue the federal government and prevent them from imposing mandatory health care coverage on Oklahoma citizens.

Public Opinion

Americans Support for Repeal Remains Steady: According to a recent [Rasmussen report](#), 54 percent of likely voters continue to favor repealing the health care reform legislation. Further, 56 percent believe this new law will increase health care costs, while 52 percent say the legislation is bad for the country.

President Obama's Approval Ratings Unchanged from April: In a recent [CBS News/NY Times poll](#), 51 percent of Americans approve of President Obama's overall job performance. However, a majority of those polled, 48 percent disapprove of the way he is handling health care reform.

Looking Ahead

As Administration officials continue implementing portions of the health care reform law, lawmakers on Capitol Hill turn their attention to financial reform and immigration issues.