



Call to Action: Children at the Center

(Health Reform in New Mexico)

Con Alma Health Foundation, the state's largest private foundation dedicated solely to health, was awarded a \$200,000 grant from W.K. Kellogg Foundation to continue our work in strengthening the state's healthcare safety net for children and families by identifying the most impactful next steps from Con Alma's report, *Achieving Equity in Health for Children and Families in New Mexico Through the Affordable Care Act (ACA)**, and increasing the capacity of stakeholders around health reform.

Project goals:

1. Create an actionable agenda regarding elements of health-care reform critical to children and families in New Mexico
2. Increase stakeholders' ability to work together and advocate for the health rights and needs of low-income and vulnerable populations, especially children and families in NM
3. Strengthen the health-care safety net for vulnerable children and families in NM

Background: This grant represents the next phase of our work with health-care reform in New Mexico. Previously we partnered with organizations to study how well our state was implementing measures of the Affordable Care Act that pertained to health equity, when everyone has an equal chance at living a healthy life regardless of a person's zip code, race or income. As a result of our study and the significant involvement of stakeholders, we produced a comprehensive report that outlines strengths of the ACA as well as gaps in care. The report, *Achieving Equity in Health for Children and Families in New Mexico*, includes baseline data never put together before and recommendations for policy makers to maximize ACA's benefits for children and families in NM.

This grant will allow us to bring stakeholders together again to develop a specific plan that our state and local leaders can act upon to ensure that children in New Mexico are getting the full advantages of health-care reform. It will help establish a network of organizations that are ready to mobilize and advocate for health issues on an ongoing basis, and to strengthen our state's fragile health-care safety net -- social and health services that have been impacted since the passage of the ACA.

Con Alma Health Foundation is pleased to partner with the New Mexico Health Equity Partnership (HEP), an initiative at the Santa Fe Community Foundation, on this project. HEP will assist with project coordination. Lisa Cacari Stone, PhD, lead researcher and author of the ACA report (2016), will serve as the project consultant, and Nadine Tafoya & Associates will be the project evaluator.

As with all of our work, our role is to bring people together who should have a voice. These partners will determine the solutions to the challenges the children and families of New Mexico face in accessing the quality health care services they need.

About Health in New Mexico:

Our study found that many ACA provisions helped advance health and health equity for children and families. However, the ACA's future is uncertain as the current federal administration has vowed to repeal and replace health-care reform. Proposed changes being considered by Congress could limit or eliminate any gains NM has had in advancing health equity, increasing the number of insured residents and ensuring certain standards of care.

*Cacari Stone, L. & Osterfoss, M. (2016), *Achieving Equity in Health for Children and Families in New Mexico Through the Affordable Care Act*. Con Alma Health Foundation & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy, College of Population Health, University of New Mexico.

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Project Strategies:

- Consider key findings and recommendations from our ACA assessment report to help create an actionable agenda focusing on ACA measures critical to children and families
- Ensure that organizations and stakeholders are involved in the process, including low-income communities, communities of color and rural communities
- Develop and support an expanded health-reform action network designed to organize and mobilize stakeholders to advocate around a shared agenda regarding policies, services or activities impacting health care and health equity
- Continue to identify organizations that track ACA implementation and see how we can support and add to the monitoring
- Provide information about the project to the public, policy makers and other multi-sector stakeholders, including state departments
- Seek feedback about project impact through reports, conferences and presentations
- Establish a project team to provide leadership and an evaluation team to monitor and assess the impact of project activities and strategies on an ongoing basis

Project Team

From Con Alma Health Foundation (CAHF):
Melanie Goodman, CAHF Community Advisory Committee (CAC); Nelsy Dominguez; Dennis McCutcheon; Amy Donafrio, Melissa Hongkham & Dolores E. Roybal, PhD (Project Director)

From Health Equity Partnership, an initiative at the Santa Fe Community Foundation:
Jessica Jensen; David Gaussoin & Vaughan Glidden

Lisa Cacari-Stone, PhD, ACA Report, Lead Author*

Project Evaluators: Nadine Tafoya & Associates; Kee Straights, PhD

Health Policy Project Consultants:
Charlie Alfero, Southwest Center for Health Innovation
Abuko Estrada, NM Center on Law & Poverty
Erik Lujan, All Pueblo Council of Governors, Health Committee & Native American Prof. Parent Resources
Terrie Rodriguez, NM Alliance of Health Councils
Barbara Webber, Health Action New Mexico

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Or visit our website at <https://conalma.org/call-to-action-children-at-the-center/>

Con Alma builds partnerships, advocates for all and invests in systemic change to improve health in New Mexico.