



Affordable access to high quality health care

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Learn more about Dirigo Health at www.dirigohealth.maine.gov, or contact us directly:

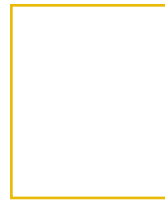
For DirigoChoice and the Maine Quality Forum, please contact:

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For the State Health Plan and other Dirigo Health Reform inquiries, please contact:

Governor's Office for Health Policy and Finance
15 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0015
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Dirigo Health... Making Health Care Better — Together

Toward sustainable health care

Maine's current health care situation is not sustainable. Between 1996 and 2002, the cost of a family health care policy increased by 77%. Income rose just 6% during that time. We now pay more of our income for health care than 45 other states. Today, many small businesses and workers choose between unpredictable costs and no health coverage at all. Over 130,000 Maine people go without health insurance. Most of these people work in small business or are self-employed.

More than health coverage

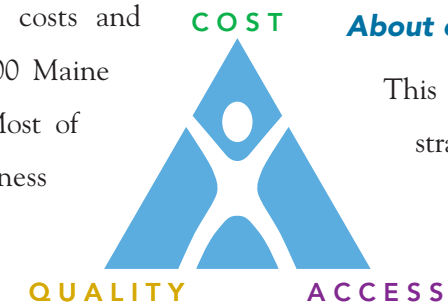
Dirigo Health is a set of reform initiatives with a goal of ensuring all Maine people have access to health coverage by 2009. But Dirigo Health is more than health coverage. It addresses all areas of our health care system.

Dirigo Health works to contain costs, ensure high quality health care, and increase access for Maine's working people and families through DirigoChoice™ health coverage. All three aspects of our health care system (cost, quality, and access) must be addressed at the same time.

About our newsletter

This issue of *Dirigo Health News* focuses on the strategies of Dirigo Health. There is information about cost, quality, and access. Future issues will cover DirigoChoice, the Maine Quality Forum, and Maine's State Health Plan.

Dirigo Health is a long-term solution that pays for itself. We can make it work, if we all work together.



highlights

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Rising costs are making health care unaffordable – We can do better!

In the past 10 years, Maine's health care costs have more than doubled to over \$7 billion. Dirigo Health will work to contain health care costs.

Examples of cost containment strategies include:

- Reduce bad debt and charity care (\$275 million per year that we all pay for in our premiums).
- Create a biennial State Health Plan to make better use of our health care resources, launch efforts to promote healthier living and prevention of chronic illness, and help Maine become the healthiest State.
- Ensure wiser development of health care services.
- Contain costs by limiting expensive capital investments to those for the common good, and prevent unnecessary duplication.
- Transparency in prices: providers will let customers know prices of common procedures.
- Voluntary caps on costs and operating margins for hospitals and other providers.
- Strengthen oversight of insurance rates.

Dirigo Health – Committed to high quality health care

Maine is one of the leading states in providing high quality health care. As we work to contain costs and increase access, we must also ensure the best possible quality of health care.

Maine Quality Forum — Your guide to high quality health care

The Maine Quality Forum is part of Dirigo Health. Its mission is to advocate for high quality health care and help each Maine citizen make good health care choices. To do this, the Maine Quality Forum promotes best practices and provides information to improve health. It is an informational resource for health care providers and consumers.

For more information, see www.MaineQualityForum.gov or call 207-287-9900.



Moving toward universal access to health care

Maine people are being priced out of the insurance market. An important goal of Dirigo Health is for all Maine citizens to have access to health coverage by 2009. Dirigo Health will increase access by containing health care costs. At the same time, it will work to safeguard and improve the quality of health care.

And, Dirigo Health is increasing access by launching a new health coverage plan called DirigoChoice.

Specifically DirigoChoice:

- Offers coverage to small businesses, the self-employed, and individuals.
- Includes an extensive benefit plan plus wellness and prevention coverage.
- Provides discounts on monthly payments and reductions to deductibles and out-of-pocket expenses to those who need it most.
- Look for details on DirigoChoice in the next issue of *Dirigo Health News*.

Recent Milestones – we’re Making Progress

- **DirigoChoice to be carried by Anthem** Sign-up for small businesses and the self-employed began October 4th. Benefits will start as early as January 1, 2005. Sign-up for individuals will start in February 2005. The next issue of this newsletter will include more information on DirigoChoice. To get a quote and application, call Anthem at (800) 541-4251 or TTY 1-888-671-4333. For more information, please visit www.dirigohealth.maine.gov
- **Maine Quality Forum website goes online** The new Maine Quality Forum website is unique because it provides health care information that is specific to Maine. Use this information to help you obtain the best quality of care and improve your health. Visit www.MaineQualityForum.gov
- **One-Year State Health Plan released** On July 26, 2004, the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance released the first State Health Plan. The Dirigo Health Reform Act requires that Maine have a health plan. The Plan will help Maine become the healthiest state in the nation. The Plan sets goals and cites ways to bring down costs, improve quality and increase access to health care for all Maine citizens. Visit www.dirigohealth.maine.gov
- **Capital Investment Fund launched to contain costs** The Capital Investment Fund sets annual health care spending targets for the most expensive hospital and non-hospital projects. The Capital Investment Fund was authorized as part of the Dirigo Health Reform Act. It is a tool to curb the growth of costly investments. The Fund will also prevent inappropriate duplication of services. Visit www.dirigohealth.maine.gov

