

## SHARE Grantee Newsletter — September 10, 2009

### NEWS FROM GRANTEES

#### **Sharon Long to Present SHARE Findings at the AEA/ASSA Annual Meeting**

Sharon Long and her research team from the Urban Institute will be presenting findings from their SHARE project at the January 2010 AEA/ASSA (American Economic Association / Allied Social Science Associations) Annual Meeting in Atlanta. The team's presentation, "Early Evidence on the Impact of Massachusetts' Health Reform Initiative on Health Care Access and Utilization" will be part of a session titled, "The Massachusetts Health Reform Experiment: Early Experiences." To view a preliminary program for the conference, which will take place from the 2nd through the 5th of January, [click here](#).

#### **Helen Margaret Sommers Arrives**

SHARE is happy to congratulate grantee Anna Sommers on the arrival of her daughter, Helen Margaret ("Maggie") Sommers. Maggie was delivered on her due date of Monday, August 10th, at 1:39 pm. She was born weighing a healthy 7 lbs. 10 oz., and is doing very well. We wish the Sommers family all the best with their new addition!

### SHARE and SHADAC NEWS

#### **CPS and ACS Data Release Calls**

CPS (Current Population Survey) and ACS (American Community Survey) health insurance coverage estimates for 2008 will be released on September 10th and September 22nd, respectively. SHADAC will be hosting two data release events:

##### **CPS Data Release Conference Call**

**Date:** Friday, September 11, 2009

**Time:** 1:00-2:15pm (EDT)

The purpose of this call is to discuss the major findings and measurement issues with Chuck Nelson, Assistant Division Chief for Income, Poverty and Health Statistics in the U.S. Census Bureau's Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division. If you would like to review the report in advance, you will be able to find it [here](#). Questions will be fielded during the call.

##### **ACS Data Release Webinar**

**Date:** Wednesday, September 23, 2009

**Time:** 1:00-2:15pm (EDT)

The ACS is a new data source for health insurance coverage estimates, with 2008 being the first year of data. The U.S. Census Bureau conducts the ACS to provide communities with up-to-date information on key demographics and policy-relevant data. An important feature of the ACS is that it will include a large enough sample for state-level and sub-state health insurance coverage estimates.

This webinar will provide an overview of the ACS study design and estimates, with comparisons to the CPS estimates. We will again be joined by Chuck Nelson, and questions will be fielded during the webinar. SHADAC will provide more information on the ACS data, including where the data will be posted, as this information becomes available.

Both of these events are free and open to the public, but advanced registration is required. If you plan to dial in with a group, only one individual per group needs to register. [Click here to register](#). Please contact Marie Kirsch if you have any questions about registration (612-624-4802 or [kirs0069@umn.edu](mailto:kirs0069@umn.edu)).

### **SHARE and SHADAC to Release Issue Briefs**

In the coming weeks, SHARE will be releasing a number of issue briefs. The first of these will provide a synthesis of findings from multiple SHARE studies, and the briefs that follow will each focus on findings from one SHARE project. SHADAC has published an issue brief about the ACS health insurance estimates that can be found [here](#).

### **SHARE to Host Roundtable at NASHP**

SHARE is hosting a roundtable luncheon at the NASHP Annual State Healthy Policy Conference in October. The roundtable will take place on Wednesday, October 7, from 12 noon to 1:30 pm and will provide an opportunity for SHARE grantees to present and discuss findings. If you will be at the conference and are able to attend the roundtable, please RSVP to Carrie Au-Yeung ([butle180@umn.edu](mailto:butle180@umn.edu)).

### **Lynn Blewett Participates in local Town Hall Meeting**

Lynn Blewett participated in a town hall forum on federal health reform in Saint Paul, MN on September 1st. The event was hosted by State Representatives Erin Murphy (DFL - Saint Paul) and Tom Huntley (DFL - Duluth) and featured comments from U.S. Representative Betty McCollum (DFL - MN) and Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman (DFL). Dr. Blewett was part of an expert panel along with Dr. Mick Belzer, Medical Director of Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis, and Pastor Grant Stevenson, Chair of the ISAI AH Clergy and Religious Leaders Caucus. [Click here](#) to read more about Dr. Blewett's town hall experience.

### **Lynn Blewett Testifies before Minnesota Senate Finance Sub-Committee**

On August 19th, SHARE Director Lynn Blewett testified before the Minnesota Senate Finance Committee's Health and Human Services Budget Division at the State Capitol. The committee chair, Senator Linda Berglin (DFL-Minneapolis), invited Dr. Blewett and her colleague, Jean Abraham, to present information on both the current status of federal health reform efforts and the potential impact of federal reform on the states. [Click here](#) to read Dr. Blewett's blog about the event.

## GRANTEE ACTION ITEMS

### **Call for Abstracts for 2010 AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting**

The Call for Abstracts for the AcademyHealth 2010 Annual Research Meeting (ARM) will open on November 2, 2009, with a deadline of January 14, 2010. Once again, SHARE plans to coordinate a panel presentation for the conference. Please contact Carrie Au-Yeung ([butle180@umn.edu](mailto:butle180@umn.edu)) by December 7, 2009, if you will have findings to present and want to be considered for the panel. The ARM is scheduled for June 27-29, 2010, in Boston. For further details about the conference, [click here](#).

As you plan for the ARM, please keep in mind that SHARE plans to hold another grantee breakfast - more details to follow.

### **Manuscripts for HSR Special Issue Are Due December 15th**

To all grantees who were invited to submit manuscripts for the SHARE HSR Special Issue Journal, this is a reminder that manuscripts are due to SHARE by Tuesday, December 15th. When you are prepared to submit your manuscript, please do so electronically via our online submission site, Manuscript Central, at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/hsr>. Once submitted, manuscripts will be reviewed internally and, upon internal approval, they will be sent out for external peer review.

Remember, the sooner you submit your manuscript, the sooner we can make a decision and get the manuscript under review. Please contact Carrie Au-Yeung ([butle180@umn.edu](mailto:butle180@umn.edu)) if you have any questions about manuscript guidelines or submission procedures.

## STATE HEALTH REFORM NEWS

### **HHS Announces SHAP Grant Recipients**

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has awarded \$70.9 million in grants to 13 states to support the expansion of health care coverage for their uninsured populations. Funding for the grants was provided by the new State Health Access Program (SHAP), which is a successor to the HHS State Planning Grant (SPG) program. The SHAP grants are to be awarded over a 5-year period and require a 20 percent state match, unless financial hardship is demonstrated. States must also show that they can sustain the program after federal funding ends. [Click here](#) to view the full list of grantees along with their grant award details.

### **Delaware Approves Cover-All-Kids Legislation**

Delaware Governor Jack Markell signed legislation on August 27th expanding the state's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Parents whose income is too high to qualify for subsidized coverage through Medicaid or CHIP will soon be able to pay a monthly premium of \$170 per child plus administrative fees (i.e., the state's entire cost) for insurance that is actuarially equivalent to CHIP or Medicaid.

CHIP coverage in Delaware is currently only available to children under age 19 with family incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). However, nearly half of Delaware's uninsured children come from families with incomes above this cut-off point.

It is expected that the CHIP buy-in will be helpful to lower-income families with uninsured kids because they need only enroll their children, rather than the entire family. Many major insurers do not allow child-only coverage, and the cost of family coverage can surpass \$1,000 a month, which is unaffordable for many people.

The legislation (H.B. 139) does include some crowd-out provisions. Namely, a child must have been uninsured for at least three consecutive months, unless his or her parents are currently eligible for unemployment benefits or lost health coverage involuntarily.

The passage of H.B. 139 makes Delaware the fourteenth state to allow a CHIP buy-in with no income limit. To view the text of Delaware's legislation, [click here](#).

Please [click here](#) to view SHARE's state policy summary about cover-all-kids strategies like the one used in Delaware. SHARE will be releasing additional state policy summaries in the coming weeks, each of which will detail a particular state coverage strategy and provide a catalog of state policies that use the strategy described. SHARE will issue blog alerts as these tables become available. To subscribe to the SHARE blog, sign up at [www.shadac.org/SHARE](http://www.shadac.org/SHARE).

### **Utah Launches Nation's Second State Health Insurance Exchange**

Utah joined Massachusetts last week to become the second state to offer a health insurance exchange. The Utah Health Exchange is an internet portal where residents can find, compare, and purchase private individual and family health insurance coverage. The website also provides a standardized electronic application and enrollment process for all applicants and plans.

Under HB188, which was signed by Governor Gary Herbert in March 2009, small employers (those with 2 to 50 workers) can relieve themselves of the burden of administering an insurance plan by instead providing employees with pre-tax dollars through either a health reimbursement arrangement or a Section 125 Cafeteria Plan. Workers can then take these funds and purchase insurance through the Exchange, choosing whatever plan is best for them via user-friendly decision-making tools, such as premium contribution calculators. Families and individuals who don't get insurance through their employer can purchase insurance through the Exchange on their own.

An important feature of the Exchange is that coverage purchased through the Exchange is portable from one job to the next, since the Exchange accepts premium payments from multiple sources (simultaneously or over time): An enrollee can aggregate contributions from his/her employer and contributions from other sources, such as a second employer, a spouse's employer, state assistance programs, etc.

As of August 19th, 150 small companies (none of them exceeding 50 employees) will be part of a test launch of the Utah Health Exchange, along with uninsured individuals and families who choose to apply. (The Exchange will be available to large employer groups in late 2011, allowing some time for the Exchange to work through potential technical, outreach, and customer service glitches.)

The performance of Utah's exchange is likely to be closely monitored at the national level, since the three major congressional reform proposals (from the House Tri-Committee,

Senate HELP Committee, and Senate Finance Committee) all recommend an insurance exchange of some kind.

To learn more about the Utah Health Exchange, [click here](#).

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### **SEND US YOUR NEWS!**

If you have news items that you would like SHARE to highlight, please send them to Caroline Au-Yeung at [butle180@umn.edu](mailto:butle180@umn.edu).

SHARE is a National Program Office funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to fund, synthesize and disseminate evaluations of state health reform. Periodically, SHARE will send a newsletter outlining upcoming events, grantee activities and updates on our funded projects. For more information, visit SHARE's web site, [www.statereformevaluation.org](http://www.statereformevaluation.org).

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