



**Research Findings—
Implementing Health Reform:
A Communications Perspective**

August 19, 2010

By Lake Research Partners, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research,
and The Herndon Alliance

Herndon Alliance Research

Conducted April 19-25, 2010

National poll

1,000 likely voters

Anzalone Liszt Research

Conducted July 8-19, 2010

**8 focus groups: Las Vegas, Charlotte, Philadelphia, St. Louis
with seniors, blue collar women, voters under 40, Latinos, and
rural and suburban St. Louis women**

Lake Research Partners

Conducted July 29 – August 1, 2010

On line survey of 2,000 likely voters

Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research



Why research?

- Present positive case for reform
- Make gains in support and build resistance to repeal (blue collar women, Latinos, seniors, young voters)
- Provide communications tools to address health reform

Challenging Environment

Straightforward 'policy' defenses fail to be moving voters' opinions about the law.

Public is disappointed, anxious, and depressed by current direction of country—not trusting.

Voters are concerned about rising health care costs and believe costs will continue to rise.

Women in particular are concerned that health law will mean less provider availability—scarcity an issue.

Many don't believe health reform will help the economy.



Public can be moved from initial skepticism and support for repeal of the law to favorable feelings and resisting repeal—your approach determines ability to facilitate this shift in attitude.

Use personal stories—coupled with clear, simple descriptions of how the law benefits people at the individual level—to convey critical benefits of reform.

These stories need to be credible, not complicated, relatable to the audience you are speaking to, and first person voice preferred.

Personal story/first person voice:

“My name is Lindsay. I’m 23 years old and I have a 6 year old son named Jacob who has asthma. We got our health insurance from my husband’s employer, but he lost his job recently. He found a new job that pays OK, but his new health insurance company will not give Jacob coverage because he has a **pre-existing condition**. I wait tables too, but we just can’t afford to pay medical expenses out of pocket. I know the new health insurance law isn’t perfect, but starting in September, it will be illegal for insurance companies to deny **children with pre-existing conditions** healthcare coverage. I can’t tell you what a relief it is to me that Jacob will get the care that he needs. I really hope this law does not get repealed.”

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**Strategic Recommendations:
Additional 'To Dos'**

**Let voters know the healthcare
law passed!**

Focus on the core provisions that the public values and keep it simple.

top tier: end discrimination based on pre-existing conditions for children and adults, lifetime caps and dropping people when they get sick.

second tier: providing small business tax credits to help secure coverage for their employees and requiring insurers to provide no-cost coverage of preventive care.

**Keep claims small and credible;
don't overpromise or 'spin' what
the law delivers.**

**Use transition or bridge language
to meet public where they are
and relax their defenses.**

“The law is not perfect, but it does good things and helps many people. Now we’ll work to improve it.”

Address provider scarcity and cost concerns.

Let public know that the rich (income over \$200,000/\$250,000 annually) will see a tax increase to pay for it and that an unprecedented number of new healthcare providers are being trained.

Avoid overheated political rhetoric.

Tap into individual responsibility to blunt opposition to the mandate to have health insurance.

“Those who choose not to have insurance and use the emergency room for routine care are increasing costs for the rest of us who have insurance.”

Missing
Slide

Supporters of the law and those campaigning need to highlight that Members of Congress will participate in the same plan.

**It is critical to reassure seniors
that Medicare will not be cut.**

Free preventive care

Tell non-college educated women that the health care law passed. Explain what is in the law and how it will affect them. Let them know they can keep the coverage they have now.

Tell Latinos that the health care law passed, explain what is in the law and how it will affect them by using a personal story. (Congress will participate in the same plans, help for children and small businesses, lower income families will be helped through premiums based on a 'sliding scale.')

For those voters under 40, focus on a personal story about a younger person that includes key provision. Don't make grand claims about the law. Use 'improve it' language.

**Strategic Recommendations:
The 'Do Nots'**



Don't:

- **assume public knows the health reform law passed or if they know it passed understand how it will affect them;**
- **list benefits outside of any personal context;**
- **barrage voters with a long list of benefits;**
- **use complex language or insider jargon;**
- **use heated political rhetoric or congratulatory language;**
- **say the law will reduce costs and deficit.**