



Mark Ghaly, MD, MPH and the Healthy California for All Commission

October 30, 2020

Dear Chairman Ghaly and Commissioners,

Referring to the five principles the Healthy California for All Commission adopted to govern its deliberations -- accessibility, affordability, equitability, high quality, and universality -- Dr. Alice Chen correctly emphasized at the Commission hearing on June 12, 2020 that health care in California falls markedly short of ". . . an equitable system that addresses front and center the disparities we see." At Physicians for a National Health Program, we are very concerned that the Commission has not adequately discussed the issue of equity.

Statistics in "An Environmental Analysis of Health Care Delivery, Coverage, and Financing in California" document numerous examples of inequity, yet we fail to see where you have discussed, or plan to discuss, how those inequities will be remedied by various options for unified financing. We hope you plan to do that through expert testimony, dialogue among the Commissioners, and most importantly, listening to the voices of Californians who are victims of inequity.

In particular, what will be the impact of each option you consider on:

- quality of care that is inequitable with regard to race, ethnicity, and economic status, among other characteristics?
- access that is not universal and therefore particularly inequitable with regard to economic status, immigration status, and rural communities, among other characteristics?
- affordability that is inequitable with regard to insurance status and economic status, among other characteristics?

PNHP contends that these and other inequities in health care delivery are important components of the social determinants of health. In the context of our growing confrontation with structural racism and the COVID-19 pandemic with its attendant economic disruption and increasingly uninsured and under-insured Californians, inequities in health care at this very moment are harming untold numbers of us -- perhaps the majority.

We expect the Commission to thoroughly assess the ability of various financing models and delivery system reforms to provide a structural foundation for achieving equity in health care and we contend that a single payer program is the "gold standard" to which all other financing models should be compared.

We emphasize that the Commission must examine the issue of equity with thoroughness and must not fail to assure Californians that any contemplated system other than a single-payer model equivalently resolves inequities in access, affordability, quality and universality across the entire population of California.

Sincerely,

Paul Song, MD
President

Kathleen, Healey, MD
Co-Chair

Corinne Frugoni, MD
Co-Chair

Henry L. Abrons, MD, MPH
Treasurer