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ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION AWARDS EIGHT GRANTS TO UNCOVER HEALTH REFORM IMPLEMENTATION LESSONS

Grantees to Provide Timely, User-Friendly, Evidence-Based Resources for State and Federal Policy-Makers and Agencies

Minneapolis, MN – The State Health Access Reform Evaluation (SHARE), a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), today announced eight grants to fund quick-turnaround, policy-relevant studies aimed at identifying lessons to help states shape implementation of national health reform.

“The funding of these grants will allow us to have some of the best thinkers in the country examining these important implementation activities related to the Affordable Care Act,” said Lynn Blewett, Ph.D., director of SHARE. “Both state and national policy-makers will benefit from our findings.”

First funded by RWJF in 2007, SHARE provides information on the impact of coverage expansion efforts and timely guidance about how to effectively implement health reforms. Key goals of the program are to develop a coordinated approach to the study of health reform issues – specifically as they relate to the state implementation of national reform – and to produce and disseminate informative, user-friendly findings for state and federal policy-makers and agencies, as well as leading researchers.

SHARE’s initial round of funded research on state reform efforts included: the impacts of expanding eligibility guidelines for young adult dependent coverage; the differential coverage impacts seen under reforms of varying scope; and the impact on coverage following public program enrollment and eligibility simplifications in Wisconsin and following comprehensive reforms in Vermont.

With the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), SHARE’s eight new grantees will generate quick-turnaround reports related to the implementation of ACA with a focus on states. The information coming out of these studies will be released as a series of policy-relevant briefs targeted at state and national officials. Grants announced today are:

- **Developing a Monitoring Strategy for Health Reform’s Progress and Effects**
Len Nichols, George Mason University College of Health and Human Services
- **Eligibility Determination Using Modified Adjusted Gross Income: Implications for Enrollment Under Federal Reform**
John Czajka, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

- **Evaluation of State and Federal Young Adult Dependent Coverage Expansion Policies**
Joel Cantor, Rutgers Center for State Health Policy
- **Expanding Coverage and Ensuring Access: The Challenges and Opportunities of Implementing Health Reform in Rural America**
Andy Coburn, University of Southern Maine Muskie School of Public Service
- **Implications and Options for State-Funded Programs Under Health Reform**
Theresa Sachs, Health Management Associates
- **Income Dynamics and the Characteristics of Health Reform Expansion Populations**
Lara Shore-Sheppard, Williams College
- **Strategies for Moving the SNACC Project to the Next Level – Leveraging SNACC Data for Policy and Evaluation**
Mike O’Grady, National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago
- **Using Behavioral Nudges to Improve Disease Management: Cost-Effective Strategies for Improving Care of Low-Income Diabetics**
Kate Baicker, Harvard School of Public Health

The grantees will be directed by the State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC), an RWJF-funded research center in the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota, out of which SHARE operates.

“As the nation implements the new health care law, states are going to be entering some uncharted waters,” said Brian Quinn, Ph.D., senior program officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “We are proud to support these eight projects that will help states tackle difficult issues and navigate the changing health care system.”

Lessons learned from the first round of SHARE research grants will be highlighted in a February 2011 special issue of *Health Services Research* entitled, “Using State-Level Evidence to Inform National Policy: Research from the State Health Access Reform Evaluation Program.” Articles featured in the special issue will distill lessons from state reform activity that can inform ACA implementation and will illustrate the importance of state-level research in future state and national health reform efforts.

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About State Health Reform Evaluation

The State Health Access Reform Evaluation (SHARE) is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) program that aims to provide evidence to state policy-makers on specific mechanisms that contribute to successful state health reform efforts. The program operates out of the State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC), an RWJF-funded research center in the Division of Health Policy and Management, School of Public Health, University of Minnesota. Information is available at www.statereformevaluation.org.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation’s largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americas, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 35 years, the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. By helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime.