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Social Work Organizations Oppose Repeal of Affordable Care Act

*National Association of Social Workers and Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care
say no individual or family should lose access to health care*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) transformed our health care system and extended health insurance coverage to over 20 million individuals. Steps are in place to undo the progress we have made. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care (SSWLHC) oppose efforts to fully repeal the ACA which will abolish advances that have been made for consumers and providers thanks to the law.

Repeal of the ACA and proposed bills to change the law will jeopardize consumer protections and provider benefits that Americans have come to expect from the health care system. These include affordable health care coverage through the health insurance marketplace and Medicaid expansion, coverage for pre-existing conditions, access to mental health and substance use disorder services at parity, essential health benefits and preventive care, and no annual or lifetime dollar limits.

The ACA has also advanced new integrated models of care and delivery systems, research that identifies evidence-based practices, and commitment to improving health disparities in the United States.

The negative impact of ACA repeal will be felt through personal experience and economic repercussions. Analysts estimate that 18 to 30 million people are at risk of losing health insurance coverage in the years to follow if there are changes to the individual mandate, tax credits and Medicaid expansion.

The health of individuals across the country is at stake, especially those with chronic illnesses and comorbid physical and mental health conditions. Much of the positive impact proven through integration and service delivery reform demonstration projects across the country may be lost or reversed.

The financial loss to hospitals may be over \$100 billion and will have an impact on the financial security and employment prospects for health care professionals. Without accessible health insurance coverage, health care organizations and independent practitioners, such as clinical social workers, will see a surge in uncompensated care.

Social workers and other health care professionals in a variety of settings, including hospitals, community health centers, and community-based programs, may see funding for their positions, which have been expanded and strengthened through ACA initiatives over the last six years, face cuts or elimination.

As a result, individuals stand to lose access and connection to critical health care, mental health care and social work services.

NASW and SSWLHC oppose any changes to health care that will disproportionately impact low-income and vulnerable populations. Health care social workers dedicate themselves to improving the well-being of clients and the social work community supports accessible health care services and health insurance coverage for all people.

NASW and SSWLHC urge Congress and the White House to ensure that these issues are considered and that no individual or family loses access to health services or health insurance coverage due to changes to health care law.

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The [National Association of Social Workers](#) (NASW), in Washington, DC, is the largest membership organization of professional social workers with 120,000 members. It promotes, develops, and protects the practice of social work and social workers. NASW also seeks to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, and communities through its advocacy.

The [Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care](#) is an association of 700 members who are dedicated to promoting the universal availability, accessibility, coordination, and effectiveness of healthcare, with a focus on the psychosocial components of health and illness.