

RECAP: California Leads on Getting to Universal Health Care

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Last week was a big week for health care in California, so here is a rundown of what happened and what it means! On Monday, Gavin Newsom was sworn in as the 40th Governor of California, and quickly announced his first actions on health care. Then on Thursday, Governor Newsom unveiled a state budget that put those actions into motion with first-in-the-nation investments to help Californians access health care and coverage. From removing exclusions in Medi-Cal to increasing affordability assistance for middle-income Californians to pay for health care, these steps can bring California closer than ever to universal coverage.

Actions Taken by Governor Newsom on Day One:

- [Issued an Executive Order](#) creating a large-scale single-purchaser system for prescription drugs to help drive down costs.
- [Issued an Executive Order](#) establishing a California Surgeon General to better inform public health options and opportunities.
- [Sent a letter to Congress and the President](#), asking them to empower states to transform their health care systems – a first step towards establishing a Medicare-For-All model.
- The Governor made clear his intention to bolster the ACA and take new tangible steps to universal coverage which were further detailed in the budget that he unveiled on Thursday.

Governor Newsom's Proposed State Budget:

- Invest \$200 million to expand Medi-Cal to all income eligible young adults up to age 26, regardless of immigration status.
- Increase and expand additional affordability assistance to low- and middle-income individuals and families purchasing insurance in Covered California.
 - The additional funding would help individuals making \$30,350 – \$48,560 and create new subsidies for individuals making \$48,560 – \$72,840.
 - The proposal would be funded by re-instituting the ACA's individual mandate to have coverage at the state level, as other states have done, which has helped to lower premiums.
- Use Proposition 56 tobacco tax dollars to allow for additional investments in access, screenings, and other health care system improvements

These budget investments align with those that the State Assembly proposed last year and championed by the over 60 consumer and community groups of the [#Care4AllCA campaign](#) which seeks to move California towards a universal health care system without the need for federal approvals.

[The proposed 2019-2020 budget](#) lays out a viable path to universal coverage. We will need your help to secure these vital expansions to access to care and affordability of coverage and take next steps. With additional ideas and investments, we can see how much further California can go down the path towards 100% coverage.

Health Access will continue to champion the goal of a more affordable, quality health care system for all Californians and we look forward to working with all of you to help us get there! [Learn more about how you can get involved.](#)

