

## Women's Preventive Health Service Coverage Guidelines: A Timeline

- 03/23/2010 President Obama signs into law the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA).
- 09/2010 The Institute of Medicine (IOM), tasked with creating a set of recommended clinical preventive services for women, forms a committee and begins its review.
- 11/16/2010 Aram Schvey, Policy Counsel at the Center, testifies before the IOM Committee on Preventive Services at its first meeting and urges the Committee to cover contraception as a matter of human rights.
- 07/19/2011 The IOM releases its report, *Clinical Preventive Services for Women: Closing the Gaps*. The report recommends eight women's health services to be covered by insurance plans without cost-sharing, including well-woman visits, screening for gestational diabetes, HPV testing, STI counseling, HIV screening and counseling, domestic violence screening and counseling, breastfeeding support and supplies, and contraception. The announcement is met with much celebration from women's health advocates. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops sharply criticizes the report and calls on the Obama administration to reject its proposals.
- 07/29/2011 CBS News publishes an op-ed by Nancy Northup, urging the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to adopt the guidelines. A successful Center email campaign has supporters send messages to Secretary Kathleen Sebelius of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
- 08/01/2011 HHS announces that it is adopting the IOM guidelines in an interim final rule. It also releases an amendment that exempts religious institutions like churches from covering contraception, and calls for comments on that amendment. All new health plans will begin covering preventive services, including contraception, without cost sharing on August 1, 2012. Existing plans will be grandfathered in and will not have to cover these services, but will lose that status over time as regular changes are made.
- 09/30/2011 The Center submits extensive comments on the refusal provision to the Department of Health and Human Services, addressing the government's vested interest in preventing unintended pregnancy and tackling the constitutionality of the refusal provision. The Center urges the administration to reject any such

provision. That same day, *The Hill's* Congress Blog publishes Aram Schvey's op-ed taking on the arguments of the Catholic Bishops.

- 11/02/2011 The Health Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee holds a hearing, titled "Do New Health Law Mandates Threaten Conscience Rights and Access to Care?" The Center submits testimony, prepares talking points for committee members and helps organize the list of witnesses in favor of full contraception coverage. We also work with members of the progressive religious community to deflect any framing of this issue as the religious versus the secular, and with Advocates for Youth to drum up support among young people in favor of refusal clauses.
- 11/11/2011 *The New York Times* publishes a letter to the editor from Nancy Northup in response to an editorial urging the White House not to expand the refusal provision. In her letter, Nancy argues that the existing provision is overly broad.
- 11/17/2011 The Center submits supplemental testimony to the Energy and Commerce Committee to address various claims made during the hearing.
- 12/1/2011 The Center sends supplemental comments, covering issues raised during the ongoing public debate since the closure of the docket in September, to the Department of Health and Human Services and top-level White House officials.
- 12/22/2011 The first lawsuits are filed against the federal government over the contraceptive coverage mandate.
- 1/20/2012 HHS announces that it will not expand the exemption. Religious non-profit organizations have an extra year to comply with the rule if their plans do not currently cover contraception.