

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

HOW THE HEALTH CARE LAW BENEFITS AFRICAN AMERICANS

The Affordable Care Act provides for sweeping changes that will substantially impact the health care, health and wellness and thus lives of African American individuals and communities. The investments in research, prevention and primary care made by the Health Care Law will go a long way to lessen the health burdens of the underserved. Racial and ethnic minorities make up 30 percent of the population, but 50 percent of the uninsured, due largely to higher unemployment and more low-income workers who lack health insurance coverage. The health care law addresses these issues head-on by:

- **Expanding coverage and increasing access** for the roughly 21% of African Americans who are currently uninsured, an additional 3.8 million African Americans will be covered by 2016.
- **Increasing health care equity** in a number of areas including funding for cultural competency, training for medical, nursing and allied health students and funding for disparities research and delivery system innovations.
- **Expands Medicaid eligibility** increasing access to a program that is critical to racial and ethnic minorities, especially those with serious or chronic health needs. Medicaid covers nearly 22 percent African Americans cancer, roughly 25% of African Americans with diabetes, more than 20% of African Americans with heart disease or stroke, and well over 33% of African Americans with chronic lung diseases.
- **Increases awareness of minority issues and health care disparities** by expanding the authority of the Office of Minority Health within a number of federal agencies including the Center for Disease Control, Food and Drug Administration, and the Health Resources and Services Administration.