



# SustiNet Health Partnership

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## **SUSTINET BOARD FINALIZES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW STATE HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN TO EXPAND COVERAGE, REDUCE COSTS**

Public Release to State Officials Planned for January 2011

Hartford, CT—The SustiNet Health Partnership Board of Directors – co-chaired by Nancy Wyman, State Comptroller and Lieutenant Governor-elect, and Kevin Lembo, State Healthcare Advocate and State Comptroller-elect – met this morning via conference call to review and vote on the final draft of recommendations to implement SustiNet, the unique state strategy to slow health care cost growth and expand access to quality health care coverage for Connecticut residents. The call was broadcast in a hearing room at the State Capitol, to ensure that members of the media and the public could continue to be informed about the Board's actions.

During the meeting, Board members and consultants shared their final draft of recommendations that provide a detailed roadmap for further implementation of the policy vision embodied in 2009 state legislation.

“The Governor-elect and I are committed to make Connecticut a national front-runner in health reform that slows cost growth and delivers better quality health care,” said Wyman. “By implementing the country’s best thinking about how to reform health care delivery, SustiNet’s short-term goal is to slow cost growth while improving the care received by Connecticut’s public employees, retirees and low income families. SustiNet will then be offered as a new health insurance choice for employers and households throughout the state.”

Currently, the Connecticut state government spends about \$8 billion annually on health care coverage for state employees, retirees, Medicaid recipients and other populations.

“We’ve estimated that the combination of federal health care reform and SustiNet will save Connecticut taxpayers \$226-\$277 million per year, starting in 2014, by replacing current state spending on HUSKY and Medicaid with newly-available federal dollars,” explained Lembo. “And if SustiNet slows health care cost growth by just one percentage point per year, state budget deficits will fall by \$355 million in 2014, with reductions reaching more than \$500 million a year, starting in 2019.”

During an intensive sixteen month process Connecticut citizen/experts— including physicians and other health professionals, organized labor, small business leaders, members of faith communities and individuals with specific expertise in employee health benefits, actuarial science, information technology and racial and ethnic disparities in health care—participated in advisory committees and task forces. These volunteer committees examined current public

health challenges such as obesity and smoking cessation, health care delivery systems, payment reforms and electronic medical records. The Sustinet Board reviewed these reports and created recommendations that also drew from expert resource and staffing models, as well as input from the public.

The recommendations call for improving how health care resources are managed and fully implementing federal health care reform to achieve several goals:

- Slowing the growth of public and private health care costs
- Expanding access to affordable, high-quality, comprehensive coverage for Connecticut residents
- Implementing a delivery system and payment reforms that will benefit state residents
- Providing Connecticut employees and individuals with a new health plan option
- Improving access to care among low-income residents
- Reducing racial and ethnic disparities related to health care access and quality

The recommendations were overwhelmingly approved by a vote of seven board members in favor with two absent and one opposed. Wyman and Lembo also voted in favor of the proposal.

In all, the Board held 20 meetings and three briefing/feedback sessions that were all open to the public and attended by ordinary citizens, news media and interest group representatives.

To learn more about Sustinet or to access transcripts and recordings of the Board's meetings and briefings, please visit [www.ct.gov/Sustinet](http://www.ct.gov/Sustinet).