



## **Discussion Guide for Ministries & Study Groups**

### **Introduction**

This discussion guide seeks to encourage meaningful dialogue on the health care issue so we can be a catalyst for change in our church and community. As the poet Maya Angelou used to say, “When you know better, you do better.”

Accordingly, the various lesson topics in this guide are designed to lead us to a place where we know better.

This discussion guide consists of six topics. The objective is to increase awareness around each topic and provide church members with information they can use to help educate others in the church and the community about their decision to enroll in Covered California.

At the end of the day, our goal is to make sure everyone can get the health care they need and deserve and that they are able to prosper and be in good health.

Ultimately, we want everyone to come away with the sure knowledge that we don't have to cope with not having health insurance; that our health is important and that everything important should be insured. Thanks to Covered California, health insurance is affordable and accessible to everyone. We also want everyone to understand the great benefit in having and maintaining health insurance and when used as intended can add years to our life and contribute to better health and peace of mind for our entire family.

That's why we agree, it's not just health care, it's life care.

### **Using the Discussion Guide**

The Discussion Guide was developed for use in small groups. It works together with other resources in the Pastor's Tool Kit such as the PowerPoint presentation and fact sheets, which can be used as references or general information tools to support group discussion.

Consider placing health care on an upcoming ministry workshop agenda and using the Discussion Guide to help facilitate the discussion.

## **Discussion Guide Objective**

Through our faith-based study groups, we hope to generate awareness and dialogue around the value of health care coverage and access to medical treatment for African-Americans in California.

For years, African-Americans have coped without health care coverage. We experience it as coping with aches and pains and relying on home remedies to get over what ails us. The impact of that reality has been devastating for millions of African-Americans nationwide and right here in our own community.

Generally speaking, African-Americans die younger than their white counterparts due to lack of access to quality health care. Researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that for black people, life expectancy at birth rose from age 71 in 1999 to 75.5 by 2013. By comparison, white people's life expectancy increased from age 77 to 79. (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics)

As a community of believers, we know we can and we must close the gap in African-American life expectancy. That is why our church has taken on the task of educating our members and our community about ways they can live a healthier, more abundant life.

## **Discussion Topics**

### Discussion Topic #1: How has Obamacare impacted you?

- Your family?
- Other people you know?

*Ask group to share:*

- Personal or family experience and or life-saving event.
- Learning about an illness that was caught in time.

Reference Materials:

- African American Health Disparities Fact Sheet

### Discussion Topic #2: What is Obamacare in California, and do you think it's working?

*Ask group to share:*

- Understanding that Covered California is "Obamacare," also known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
- Perceptions that barriers still remain.
- If they know anyone who has coverage through Covered California.
- Testimonials.

Reference Materials:

- Pastor's Tool Kit PowerPoint

### Discussion Topic #3: Why is health care coverage important?

*Ask group to share:*

- Knowledge of health disparities
- How having health care coverage makes a difference?

Reference Materials:

- African American Health Disparities Fact Sheet

### Discussion Topic #4: Is health care really affordable?

*Ask group to share:*

- Awareness of financial assistance available only through Covered California.
- Awareness of metal tiered structure (Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze) of Covered California plans.
- Awareness of tax penalties for not having health care coverage.
- Understanding that preventive care, including prescription medications and wellness exams, saves money.

Reference Materials:

- Metal Tiers Fact Sheet
- If web access is available, demonstrate using the online Covered California calculator and Shop & Compare feature.

### Discussion Topic #5: How to enroll in Covered California?

*Ask group to share:*

- Options for in-person assistance or telephone or website enrollment.
- Ease of understanding Covered California information and materials.
- Knowledge of enrollment deadlines.

Reference Materials:

- How To Enroll Fact Sheet
- Special Enrollment Fact Sheet

### Discussion Topic #6: What can we do, as a church community, to help get people enrolled?

*Ask group to share:*

- Ideas for the church to host enrollment events and other activities.
- Ideas for hosting enrollment event with other faith-based or community-based organizations.
- Information about navigators, enrollment counselors, or insurance agents they know who can help with enrollment.

Reference Materials:

- How To Enroll Fact Sheet
- Special Enrollment Fact Sheet
- Navigator Directory