

# APHA 2010: Health-care reform and people with disabilities

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Federal health care reform legislation holds out the promise of a more independent life for people with disabilities, but whether or not that dream can become a reality will be determined by regulations yet to be written.

While much attention has been focused on the debate over [health care reform](#) and the Republican party's vow to repeal it, many people may not realize the regulations that will govern provisions helping those with disabilities remains a work in progress. Heather A. McCabe, J.D., assistant professor in Indiana University's School of Social Work, said individuals can play an important role in the design and effectiveness of these regulations if they make their opinions known.

"Regardless of whether you like the reforms, you need to participate in the regulatory process," said McCabe, who also has adjunct faculty positions in the Department of Public Health at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and with the IU School of Law-Indianapolis.

In essence, McCabe says if people want to see the type of reform promised in the legislation, they are going to have to press their case every chance they get.

"Contact senators. Talk to state and U.S. representatives. Follow the Federal Register for opportunities to comment on proposed regulations. Partner with membership groups. Write letters and tell your story -- It's

amazing what kind of attention it can get."

**More information:** For those unfamiliar with the Federal Register, it can be found at [www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html) . It is the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents. McCabe said new regulations can be found using key words, such as "health care reform." The information will include details for how public comments can be submitted for consideration.

Provided by Indiana University

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