



## Evaluating Candidates' Positions on Health Care in the 2020 Election

On Tuesday, November 3, 2020, Americans will head to the polls to vote for president, their congressional representatives, and state and local elected officials. With the flood of competing information and campaign ads leading up to the 2020 elections, it can be difficult to keep up with candidates' positions on healthcare and how those positions might impact access to care for people with diabetes and the overall healthcare system. ADCES has developed this resource document to assist members in evaluating the healthcare proposals offered by candidates for public office at all levels – local, state, and federal. ADCES believes there are certain core principles central to the care of those affected by or at risk for diabetes. Highlighting these core issues can provide a lens through which diabetes care and education specialists can review campaign platforms and candidates' healthcare proposals.

ADCES Core Principles:

- Healthcare proposals must seek to enhance access to and affordability of services, medications, devices, and supplies for people with diabetes.
- Healthcare proposals must support high-quality care and guarantee coverage of the comprehensive set of essential health services required by people with diabetes to manage the disease.
- Healthcare proposals must support the development of and access to innovative medications, devices, supplies, and technologies in the management and treatment of diabetes and other chronic diseases.
- Overall, healthcare proposals must promote the development and implementation of programs that reduce costs, improve care, and foster innovation.

In addition to these core principles, ADCES believes that healthcare proposals must contain these specific provisions:

### Preserve elimination of preexisting condition exclusions

As part of the Affordable Care Act, health insurers can no longer charge more, deny coverage, or limit benefits for people with diabetes and other chronic diseases.<sup>1</sup> ADCES urges candidates for public office to preserve and protect the elimination of preexisting condition exclusions.

### Prioritize prevention and screening

Unprecedented investments have been made in the prevention of diseases like type 2 diabetes. As a result, millions of Americans have access to prediabetes/type 2 diabetes screening and evidence-based diabetes prevention programs like the National Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP). ADCES supports policy positions that prioritize access to proven screenings and the necessary follow-up, as well as preventative services. Positions should include robust funding for prevention and public health initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hhs.gov/healthcare/about-the-aca/pre-existing-conditions/index.html>

## Prohibit discrimination in plan design

ADCES believes that health plans should not make coverage decisions, determine reimbursement rates, establish incentive programs, or design benefits in ways that discriminate against individuals because of their age, disability, expected length of life, etc. Healthcare proposals must ensure that health plans are not allowed to discriminate through benefit design or through other factors, including, but not limited to, those mentioned above.

ADCES encourages its members to review and assess candidates' healthcare proposals and actively reach out and share your perspective with your elected officials and candidates for public office. Election information is available on the ADCES Legislative Action Center. Click on this [link](#) and enter your address to find elections in your area.

## **How can I find out more about a candidate's position on healthcare or the specifics of their healthcare proposal?**

- Use ADCES' [Legislative Action Center](#) to find out about your local, state, and federal elections.<sup>2</sup> Visit the official campaign websites of those running for office in your area. Candidates typically have pages on their website dedicated to different topic areas including health care. Below are examples of the campaign websites for the current presidential candidates. Your members of Congress will also have campaign sites, which can serve as important resources both to assess campaign platforms and to find out about local campaign events.
  - [Joe Biden](#)
  - [Donald Trump](#)
- Use the official campaign website to contact campaigns directly and speak to campaign staff about a candidate's proposals.
- Attend local townhall or networking events to interact with candidates firsthand.
- Carefully consider and review the accuracy of information posted on social media platforms.

## **How can I talk to candidates about diabetes?**

- **Share the facts!** Currently 34.2 million Americans (1 in 10) have diabetes and 88 million American adults (1 in 3) have prediabetes.<sup>3</sup> In 2017, diagnosed diabetes and its related complications accounted for \$327 billion in medical cost and lost work and wages. Approximately 1 in 7 healthcare dollars are spent treating diabetes and its complications.<sup>4</sup> Discuss how access to diabetes-related services, medications, and devices supports the large population of people with diabetes or at risk for diabetes.
- **Support the facts with personal stories:** The numbers are important, but so is your perspective as a healthcare provider and member of the community. Discuss the human impact of diabetes. Tell your story.
- **Discuss what you know:** What do you think needs to be changed? What policies do you think are needed to help improve care for people with diabetes?

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<sup>2</sup> Use the Legislative Action Center [link](#) or visit [www.diabeteseducator.org/actnow](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/actnow) and click on the "Elections" tab. Enter your address to find the elections in your area.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/data/statistics/statistics-report.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.diabetes.org/resources/statistics/cost-diabetes>

### What questions can I ask to help better understand a candidate's stance on health care?

- What proposals do you support that increase access to health care?
- How do you propose to lower costs for medications and healthcare services?
- Discuss how you plan to support healthcare innovation.

### Resources:

- [ADCES Insulin Pricing Principles Document](#): ADCES created this document to demonstrate our position on the cost of insulin; however, many of the principles prevail across the healthcare landscape.
- [ADCES Legislative Action Center](#): Find information on elections, votes, elected officials, and how to contact offices.
- Check out non-partisan election websites like [Vote 411](#) and [Rock the Vote](#). Vote 411 has voter registration information, details on elections, and candidate information. Rock the Vote has information on voter registration.
- *Kaiser Health News* [released](#) a guide to following the health debate in the 2020 election which defines key terms like single payer and Medicare for all.
- This [article](#) provides a look at the role of health care in the 2020 Election.