



Health care reform advocates to host 1st birthday party for Affordable Care Act

Published: Saturday, March 19, 2011, 6:30 PM



By Kyla King | The Grand Rapids Press

A week of statewide events intended to celebrate **the first anniversary of the passage of health care reform** kicks off in downtown Grand Rapids Monday.

Leaders from the **Nokomis Foundation** and the **Michigan Consumers for Healthcare Advancement (MCHA)** will host a "birthday party" featuring a large cake, birthday presents, cards signed by attendees, and other birthday party-themed activities.

The event begins at 10 a.m. at The Waters Building at 161 Ottawa Ave. NW in Grand Rapids, Suite 305-C.



AP File Photo

Then U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi signs the health reform bill in March 2010 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

The party will celebrate the one-year anniversary of the **Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)**.

The Michigan Consumers for Healthcare Advancement (MCHA) is sponsoring a week-long series of events that will continue through March 25.

At Monday's event in Grand Rapids, local resident Kinfu Adisu, will speak about how he has benefited from the act, said Emily Coyle, spokeswoman for the Great Lakes Division of the **American Cancer Society**.

Coyle said Adisu has been using dental services at **Cherry Street Health Services** for the last two years.

Although Adisu is teaching as an adjunct instructor at a local college, he does not have insurance coverage and Cherry Street is the only option for him, she said.

Coyle said thanks to the Affordable Care Act's direct investment in community health centers, there will be more primary care options for health consumers.

"This is critical because 60 million U.S. residents lack a source of primary care due to provider shortages," she said. "

As health centers expand to reach more communities in need, they will serve large numbers of patients with complex health problems."

Coyle said community health centers are expected to expand their capacity to double the number of patients they currently reach from 23 million patients today to 40 million in five years.

By 2015, Michigan Health Centers are expected to be health care homes for 1.2 million Michigan residents.

E-mail Kyla King: kking@grpress.com and follow her on Twitter at twitter.com/KYLking

© 2011 MLive.com. All rights reserved.