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## New Healthcare Bill of Rights to Be Issued Soon

*Janice Simmons, for HealthLeaders Media, May 10, 2010*

During the next month, a new patient's healthcare bill of rights will be put into place at the federal level to provide "simple and clear information about their choices and their rights," President Obama announced on Saturday during his weekly radio address.

This new bill of rights will set up an appeals process "that will enforce those rights" and will prohibit insurance companies from limiting access to a patient's preferred primary care provider, obstetrician-gynecologist, or emergency room care, Obama said during his talk that focused on recent healthcare reform changes implemented during the past several weeks.

"Already, we are seeing a healthcare system that holds insurance companies more accountable and gives consumers more control," he said.

Today, the administration will announce new rules that will permit unmarried young adults who are not eligible for coverage elsewhere to continue to stay on their parents' insurance through age 26 starting this month—instead of the original date (Sept. 23) specified in the healthcare reform bill. This earlier date will permit young graduates and others to retain coverage following graduation, the President said.

In April, Health and Human Services (HHS) Kathleen Sebelius [wrote to insurers across the country](#) requesting the move-up date for this population group. Several large insurers initially agreed—with nearly 70 insurers following suit. The President requested that employer-sponsored healthcare plans follow the course of the commercial insurers to match the move-up date

The President also brought up recent efforts—what he called "real tangible elements"—to accelerate the timeline to implement provisions of the healthcare reform law that stop the practice of rescission or dropping insured individuals from plans.

The President also used the opportunity to again challenge Anthem Blue Cross, and its parent company, WellPoint, over a proposed 39% premium increase on California announced last month; the company backed down last week from the increase after discovering "numerous and substantial errors" in a filing that had supported the increase.

Last week, [Sebelius said in a letter to state governors and insurance commissioners](#) that they should reexamine any WellPoint rate increases in their states "to the extent you have authority to do so."

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