



**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Jean Silver-Isenstadt, MD, PhD

Tel: 703-254-8972

e-mail: [jean@npalliance.org](mailto:jean@npalliance.org)

**National Physicians Alliance Issues Report Card of Presidential Candidates' Health Care Plans:  
Republicans Sent to Bed without Dinner, Democrats Lose Dessert**

Reston, VA-- Today, the National Physicians Alliance (NPA) reiterates its firm commitment to the availability of quality, affordable health coverage for all Americans by releasing the [2008 Presidential Candidate Health Plan Report Card](#). "The NPA believes that health care is a right, not a privilege," says NPA President Dr. Lydia Vaias, "and we intend to hold every candidate accountable to a morally high standard on this question."

The Candidate Report Card compares the health plans of the major Democratic and Republican Presidential hopefuls on the basis of the five elements of quality health coverage as described by the Institute of Medicine (IOM, <http://www.iom.edu/CMS/3809/4660/17632.aspx>). NPA Executive Director Dr. Jean Silver-Isenstadt explains, "We chose to grade the candidates according to the IOM principles because these principles describe the attributes of a just health care system. They are principles vital to patients, physicians, and society as a whole." The candidates' plans were graded according to whether they would be likely to provide universal, patient-centered, continuous and affordable health coverage for individuals and whether the plans were sustainable for society.

"While the plans of the Democratic frontrunners overall scored higher than those of the Republicans, we found significant weaknesses in all the plans," says NPA Board member Dr. Valerie Arkoosh. The Republican frontrunners received grades that would have sent them to bed without dinner, but the Democrats' grades were also less than perfect. The Democrats lost most points for creating plans that were not sustainable for society. "Many of the plans the Democrats put forward outlined useful strategies for cost-savings, such as allowing Medicare to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies for medication prices," explains Dr. Arkoosh. "Unfortunately, for the most part the plans would not reduce administrative costs to less than 10% of total health care costs. We need to do better than that." Before he pulled out of the race, Dennis Kucinich was the only candidate in either party to earn an overall A grade, based on his Medicare for All proposal.

Despite these significant drawbacks, the National Physicians Alliance is heartened to see that guaranteed, affordable, high quality health care has become a signature issue for the 2008 Presidential election. NPA Board member Dr. Stephen Smith says, "We're looking forward to working with the next administration to make sure that all Americans have access to the health care they need. We're at a critical juncture – the U.S. government must make the conscious decision to value the health of its people. As physicians, we're fully prepared to go the distance to ensure that quality health care for all becomes a reality."

**The National Physicians Alliance 2008 Presidential Candidate Health Plan Report Card can be accessed at:**  
[http://npalliance.org/content/pages/2008\\_presidential\\_candidate\\_health\\_plan\\_report\\_card](http://npalliance.org/content/pages/2008_presidential_candidate_health_plan_report_card)

###

Representing thousands of America's doctors across medical specialties, the National Physicians Alliance seeks to restore physicians' primary emphasis on the core values of our profession: service, integrity, and advocacy. We work to improve health and well being, and to ensure equitable, affordable, high quality health care for all people. To learn more about the National Physicians Alliance, our strategic priorities, and what makes us different, please visit us online at

<http://www.npalliance.org/>