

# A Chronic Dose: A Chronic Illness Blog

A twenty-something writer's take on balancing multiple chronic conditions--the good, the bad, and the humorous.

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

## Health Care Reform: Is the Timing Right?

A few months ago, I wrote about the [economic impact of a health care system run amok](#), calling it the "other crisis." When we're too sick to participate in the workforce, when our employers can't keep up with skyrocketing costs, when preventable diseases go unchecked and result in costly complications, we all pay the price.

Now, with the recession dominating headlines and the widely circulated fear that health care reform will take a backseat to the economy, it's easy to dismiss the urgency for significant reform.

Yet I'd argue the stakes are greater than ever, and that now *is* the time—economic health is inextricably linked to our ability to access and maintain appropriate medical care. I believe this in terms of [existing chronic illness](#), of course, but that's just one part of it.

Why do I write this today? Because today was the first in a year-long series of "Summit Conversations" sponsored by the [America's Agenda Health Care Education Fund](#). These consensus-building talks bring together a diverse group of entities—politicians, policy-makers, labor unions, big Pharma. Very rarely do we see these groups united under a common goal.

The January 28th Summit talk was held at the University of Miami and hosted by President Donna Shalala. In a recent *Miami Herald* [op-ed](#), Dr. Shalala wrote,

"The Summit Conversations commence at an opportune time. Recent polls show three-quarters of Americans expect major healthcare reform legislation to be passed in President Barack Obama's first term. Democratic leaders in Congress are reaching across the aisle for bipartisan support, and there are promising responses from business and labor."

Let's hope she is right, that this is the right time for the right groups of people to come together, build consensus about reform, and turn that consensus into change.

In so many ways, we can't afford for that not to happen.

<http://achronicdose.blogspot.com/2009/01/health-care-reform-is-timing-right.html>