Registered nurses and other community leaders will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid Thursday July 30 with a rally and lobby day in Washington DC.

The celebration is part of a national day of action, in over 25 U.S. cities, that calls on policy makers to protect, improve, and expand Medicare to cover all Americans with a single standard of quality care not based on ability to pay. The overall theme is “Medicare is as American as Apple Pie,” i.e. to Protect, Improve and Expand (PIE) Medicare to cover everyone.

Planned actions include public forums, rallies, marches, skits, flash mobs and birthday celebration parties, picnics and BBQ’s. In Washington DC, after a rally with speakers and entertainment, the nurses will lobby legislators to support legislation that would improve and expand Medicare to all residents living in the U.S.

What: Rally and Lobby Day for Medicare’s 50th Anniversary
When: Thursday, July 30 - 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.
Where: Upper Senate Park, 200 New Jersey Ave NW Wash DC

Organizers say the actions will underscore the need to expand access to health care in the U.S. since, despite passage of the Affordable Care Act, millions of residents continue to go without adequate care. Twenty-one states have refused to expand Medicaid coverage to eligible patients and members of Congress, such as U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan, continue to push for reductions in Medicare with proposals to increase the eligibility age, eliminate providers and turn Medicare into a voucher program.

"After 50 years, we have a lot of experience with Medicare, enough time to see that it works, has kept tens of millions of Americans out of poverty, and remains enormously popular,” said NNU Co-President Jean Ross, RN.

"Schemes to privatize or erode Medicare would be devastating for many, many people. The best way to protect Medicare is to upgrade it and expand it to cover everyone. It is time for this country to catch up with other nations and implement a universal system of guaranteed healthcare,” Ross said.


The day of action for Medicare’s 50th anniversary also includes actions in Boston and Western Massachusetts, Chicago, Dearborn, Detroit, El Paso, Tx., Lakewood, Oh., Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Oakland, Portland, Me., St. Paul, Mn., and other cities.