

2026 Policy Focus Areas

Our Approach

- Advances patient-centered policy priorities reflecting our diverse membership
- Informed by member input, internal expertise, and Board guidance
- Focused on areas where NHC can have the greatest impact in current landscape
- Supports NHC Member legislative/regulatory policy impact via monthly Action Teams, Washington Reps Summer Meeting & Annual Retreat, and NHC Policy Connect

2026 Policy Focus Areas

- **Access and Affordability:** Ensuring patients can access and afford care.
- **Research and Innovation:** Advancing innovation, supporting public health infrastructure, and ensuring strong patient protections.
- **Nonprofit Sustainability:** Strengthening patient organizations.



2026 Policy Priorities

Access and Affordability

- Protect Medicaid, Medicare, and the ACA while ensuring access to comprehensive, affordable coverage
- Address cost shifting and reduce out of pocket burden for patients
- Advance and monitor reforms to prior authorization, step therapy, and utilization management
- Sustain focus on health care costs including drug pricing, PBMs, IRA implementation, MFN, tariffs, hospital billing, and other proposals that may impact pricing, access, and affordability
- Support and strengthen public health infrastructure and equitable vaccine access
- Promote patient-centered health AI

Research and Innovation

- Ensure stable and sustained appropriations for HHS and other key federal health agencies
- Support reauthorization of user fee agreements with robust and meaningful patient engagement

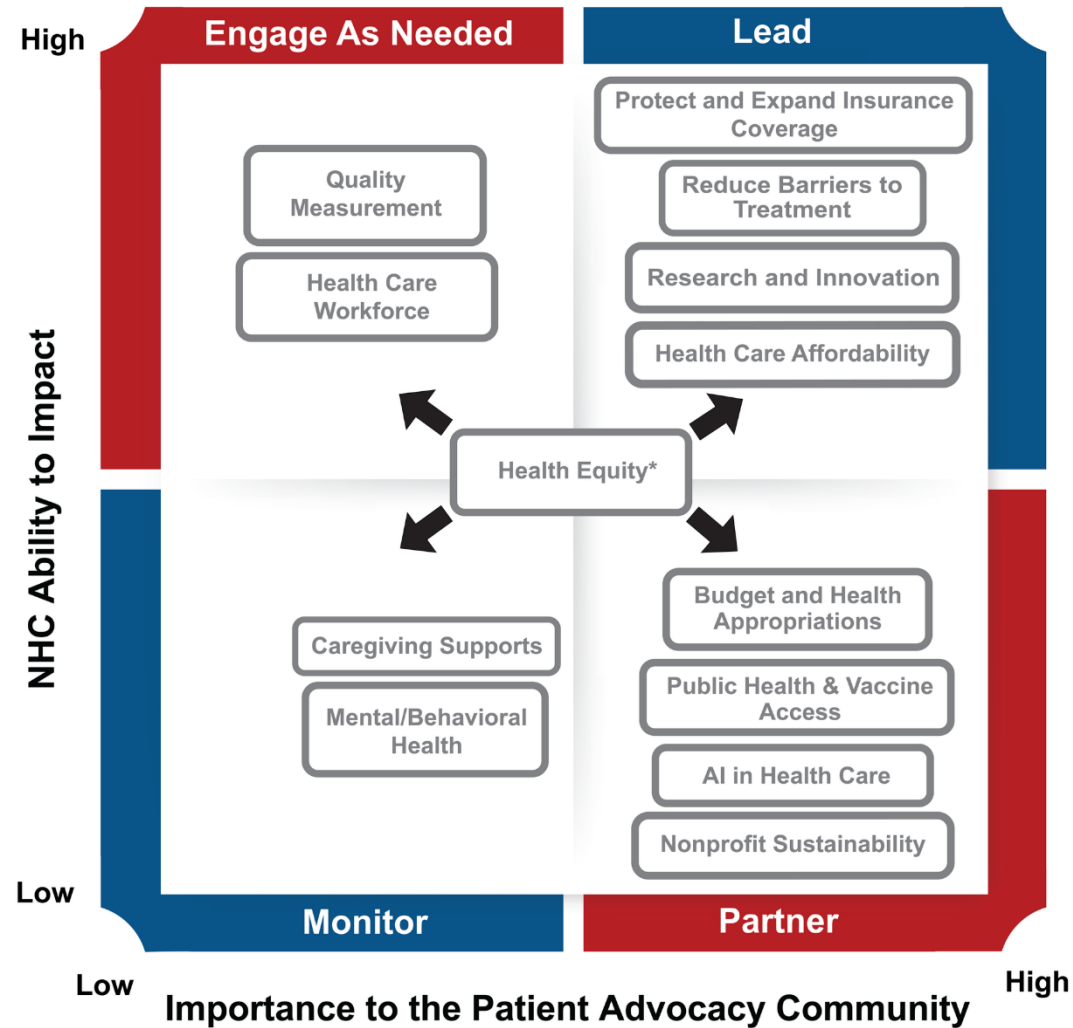
Nonprofit Sustainability

- Monitor and protect tax-exempt status and charitable giving incentives
- Protect funding streams that support patient organizations, (i.e., Combined Federal Campaign)



2026 National Health Council Policy Matrix

NHC Policy Priorities At-a-Glance



*Health Equity's placement in the middle of the Matrix is to indicate that the NHC will ensure it is an essential part of all NHC's policy activities. It is not represented by the scale of the importance to the patient advocacy community or the NHC's ability to impact.

