

Access to Care and Coverage is at Stake in Wisconsin!

Between threats to repeal the Affordable Care Act, proposals to change Medicaid as we know it, and the restructuring that has taken place around programs like the Wisconsin Well Woman Program, the future of health care access and coverage of critical women's health care services in our state is unknown.

Issue #1: Repeal of the ACA

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is the greatest advance for women's health in a generation. Attempts to repeal the ACA not only put women's access to health care in dire jeopardy, but threaten their economic security as well. Repealing the ACA risks going back to a time when women struggled to find affordable health coverage in the individual market, were routinely charged more than men for health insurance and often found that health coverage did not cover their essential health care needs. Here are just some of the many ways women stand to lose and lose big if the GOP repeals the ACA:

- Repealing the ACA would mean less access to health coverage. Millions of women would have their health insurance taken away leaving them without affordable coverage options.
- Repealing the ACA would punish women with chronic or pre-existing conditions. The ACA ended outrageous practices that allowed insurers to refuse to cover women who had breast cancer, were domestic violence survivors or who had diabetes or blood pressure.
- Repealing the ACA would take away Medicaid coverage for women and families. Taking away this option would re-open gaping holes in the nation's safety net.
- Repealing the ACA would take away financial help from millions of women and families.
- Repealing the ACA would mean women could pay more than men for the same policy.
- Repealing the ACA would take away guaranteed coverage of maternity services.
- Repealing the ACA would eliminate guaranteed coverage of preventive care like birth control without cost sharing.
- Repealing the ACA would take away support for nursing mothers.

ASK: Oppose efforts to repeal the ACA without a replacement plan in place that keeps the protections we've gained in recent years.

Supporting documents:

Urban Institute – Cost of the ACA Repeal

<http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/81296/2000806-The-Cost-of-the-ACA-Repeal.pdf>

Public News Service – Study: Repealing the ACA Would Hit Wisconsin Hard

<http://www.publicnewsservice.org/2016-12-14/childrens-issues/study-repeal-of-affordable-care-act-would-hit-wisconsin-hard/a55360-1>

Issue #2: Proposals to Change Medicaid

Federal legislative leaders are looking to Block Grant or limit Medicaid on a Per Capita basis.

In terms of Block Grants, this would give Wisconsin a set dollar amount to cover all Medicaid costs for all people who are in one of Wisconsin's 19 Medicaid funded programs or use the ForwardHealth card. Unfortunately Block Grants **do not** guarantee states will receive enough funds to cover people currently in Medicaid, or meet changing needs of a population. Therefore, states would have to decide on whether to provide **extra** funding or **cut** Medicaid costs.

Another option would be to set a per capita allocation that gives states a set dollar amount per person enrolled in Medicaid to cover all Medicaid costs. In this case, different populations (e.g. older adults, children, kids with disabilities, people with physical or developmental disabilities, mental health, low income adults) may be capped at different dollar amounts. Unfortunately it is uncertain how the per capita allocations will be determined, whether they will differ among populations, what costs they would cover, etc. And Per Capita caps **do not** guarantee that states will receive enough money to cover costs. Therefore, states would again have to decide on whether to provide **extra** funding or **cut** Medicaid costs.

ASK: Oppose block granting or limited Medicaid with a Per Capita Cap.

Supporting Documents:

Families USA – Block Grants: A Bad Idea for Medicaid <http://familiesusa.org/product/block-grants-bad-idea-medicaid>

Urban Milwaukee – Medicaid Block Grants Could Hurt Wisconsin
<http://urbanmilwaukee.com/2017/01/09/op-ed-medicaid-block-grants-could-hurt-wisconsin/>

KFF – Current Flexibility in Medicaid: An Overview of Federal Standards and State Options 1.31.17
<http://kff.org/report-section/current-flexibility-in-medicaid-issue-brief/>

Justice in Aging – Medicaid Funding Caps Would Harm Older Americans
<http://www.justiceinaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Medicaid-Funding-Caps-Would-Harm-Older-Americans-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

Issue #3: Changes to the Wisconsin Well Woman Program

The Wisconsin Well Woman Program (WWWP) is jointly funded by the state and the CDC, to provide free breast and cervical cancer screenings for women who are uninsured. You may qualify for the program if you meet income eligibility guidelines and are between the ages of 45 and 64. (Some limited exceptions may apply if you are under 45).

Over the last couple years, the Wisconsin Well Woman Program has undergone a significant change in the way it's administered. The program is now administered by 13 multi-jurisdictional regional coordinators, rather than the previous model of 72 county-based coordinators. In this new limited model, many women now have to drive up to 100 miles round trip for their screenings. The number of providers in this program has also been decreased from 1,000 to just over 400 leaving several counties with one provider sites but no actual providers.

These changes made by the Wisconsin State Department of Health Services (DHS) were made with the assumption that the Affordable Care Act would be there to offer these screening and treatment services through the Marketplace. Yet now that the future of the ACA is at stake, there is great concern that this new WWWP model has already presented new barriers to access for services in certain regions of the state and these barriers will only increase if the ACA goes away.

ASK: Wisconsin DHS needs to be prepared for an influx of patients coming back to the WWWP if the ACA goes away.

Supporting Documents:

MNNS - Advocates Question State Cutbacks In Cancer Program

<http://milwaukeeenns.org/2014/03/19/advocates-question-state-cutbacks-in-cancer-program-for-low-income-women/>

HuffPost – Breast Cancer Patient To Wisconsin: Don't Cut Health Program For Low-Income Women

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/18/wisconsin-well-woman_n_4981519.html

* Note: This information presented by Sara Finger, Director of Wisconsin Alliance of Women's Health at the February 25, 2017 International Women's Day Advocacy Training

IN SUMMARY, WE URGE YOUR SUPPORT TO:

1. Oppose efforts to repeal the ACA without a replacement plan in place that keeps the protections we've gained in recent years.
2. Oppose block granting or limited Medicaid with a Per Capita Cap.
3. Wisconsin DHS needs to be prepared for an influx of patients coming back to the WWWP if the ACA goes away.