



A Project of ABC for Health, Inc.

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HealthWatch Wisconsin Update

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Case Tip: Request Help with Securing Citizenship and Identity Verification

Are you having trouble locating or obtaining the documents necessary to verify citizenship or identity for a Medicaid application? Are you unable to afford the costs associated with doing so? Let your Income Maintenance (IM) agency worker know and **ask for help**. Per the Operations Memo number 07-21, IM agencies are now authorized to cover some of the costs associated with this process and to make the requests for these documents.

Applicants who cannot afford to pay for birth certificates and/or WI state identification cards for the purpose of documenting citizenship or identity during Medicaid/BadgerCare application process may have these costs paid for by the state. In addition, applicants who cannot locate these forms or who are having trouble obtaining them in a timely or cost-efficient manner can request that the IM agency obtain the documentation for them. However, while some IM workers may ask applicants if they require assistance with this process, **IM workers are not required to ask applicants if they need help obtaining or paying for documentation so MAKE SURE TO ASK!**

To view the online PDF version of Operations Memo 07-51: Citizenship and Identity Requirement – Paying for Documentation, please [click here](#).

Heard It Through the Grapevine...



ABC for Health has heard reports that some Medicaid applicants using the deductible feature are not being advised of all of their options following a change in income that results in no excess income.

Here is what should be happening, as dictated by Medicaid policy: According to the Medicaid Eligibility Handbook (MEH), if an income change during the deductible period **prior to**

Families – Meetings by Region

Southern: November 5, 9:00-

11:00am. Harambee Center, 2202 S. Park St, Madison. Contact ABC for Health's Nora Foshager at (608)261-6939 ext. 204 or

nfoshager@safetyweb.org with questions.

Southeastern: October 10, 10:00am-

12:00 pm. Aurora Family Services, 3200 W. Highland Blvd, Milwaukee. Contact Leah Jepson at (414) 286-6608 or ljepso@milwaukee.gov with questions.

Children's Health Access for the Special and Equal (CHASE) Meeting – October 18, 11:30am-1:30pm. ARC of Milwaukee, 7203 W. Center St. Contact Brad Holman at (414)266-3189 or bholman@chw.org with questions.

Northeastern: October 11, 9:00-

10:30am. Allouez Prevea Building – St. Vincent Conference Rm. (3rd Flr.), 1821 S. Webster Ave., Green Bay. Special Topic: Children's Mental Health Access and Coverage. Contact Steve Gerczak at (920)433-8154 or sgerczak@stvgb.org with questions.

Western: November 13, 10:45am-

12:00pm. Room 121, Chippewa County Court House, 711 N. Bridge St, Chippewa Falls. Contact Rose Marsh at 1-800-400-3678 or rmarsh@co.chippewa.wi.us with questions.

Coalitions Under Development

Barron: Contact Mike Rust at (715)

485-8525 or MikeR@co.polk.wi.us with questions.

La Crosse: Contact Lindsey Schwarz at (608) 785-5841 or

Schwarz.Lindsey@co.la-crosse.wi.us with questions.

Polk: Contact Mike Rust at (715) 485-

8525 or MikeR@co.polk.wi.us with questions.

meeting the deductible results in no excess income, the applicant may choose from the three following options:

1. Recalculate the deductible;
2. Create a new deductible period; or
3. Begin eligibility immediately.

EXAMPLE: Mary is a mother of two who applies for Medicaid/BadgerCare during the month of June. Her six-month deductible period is created for the period of March through August (backdating three months from the month of application). Her deductible is determined using her income from the month of May, since she will not know her exact June income amount until the end of the month. During the month of June, there is a change in the family's income resulting in no excess income for that month. She is able to determine this in July, once all of June has been accounted for. If Mary has not yet met the deductible, she can choose from the following three options:

- Recalculate the deductible using the actual income amounts from March, April, May, and June and using June's income as the projected income for July and August. This would result in a lower deductible, since the original deductible would have used March, April, and May's incomes and then projected the May amount (which was higher, since it occurred before the income change) for the months of June through August.
- Create a new deductible period for the period of April through September.
- Begin eligibility immediately for the month of June. If this option is selected, the applicant will have to reapply to qualify for subsequent months.

Although beginning eligibility immediately is an option, it is not the only option available. In addition, as directly stated in the MEH, "the **applicant** can choose" from the options available. It is not a determination that is to be made by the eligibility worker, but the eligibility worker can help the applicant figure out which is the best option, as this can vary depending on case-specific information. For more information on income changes prior to meeting the deductible, please see [Section 4.9.7.1 of the Medicaid Eligibility Handbook](#).

ABC for Health is interested in learning whether this is a common practice throughout the state and how much it affects applicants. Let us know if you have heard of similar incidents so we can investigate this issue further.

...What Have You Heard?

Please contact ABC for Health if you have recently learned something that bothers you and would like to find out if it is

Other Meeting Notices

- **Evidence-Based Health Policy Project Event:** October 3, 1-3pm at the Wisconsin State Capitol, Room 411 South. For more information, please contact Ceri Jenkins at cerijenkins@wisc.edu or (608) 262-6318. [Click here](#) to visit their Web site.
- **The "Help is Here Express" - Partnership for Prescription Assistance Bus:** October 4, 2-4pm at the SMHFC-Harambee Center, 2202 S. Park St., Madison. For more information, contact Nate Prouty at (612) 741-6377.
- **Covering Kids and Families State Coalition Meeting:** October 24, 9:00am-2:30pm at the Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells. **A New Way of Approaching Public Health Insurance Programs:** Covering Kids and Families has embarked on an innovative way of targeting outreach strategies to children very likely eligible for, but not enrolled in, BadgerCare; and BadgerCarePlus offers the promise of an entirely new landscape for helping working families. It's a whole new world, full of change and opportunity. [Click here](#) to view agenda items and to register at no cost.
- **Improving Wisconsin's Health: Prevention, Policy and Priorities for Research:** November 29-30 at the Country Springs Hotel in Waukesha. This conference is designed for public health care practitioners, researchers, policymakers, health care and business leaders, and others interested in successful models for addressing health priorities in Wisconsin. To register online, go to www.ocpd.wisc.edu, click on Course Catalog and scroll to the conference name. For more information, please contact Joyce Hart at (608) 265-8070 or jhart3@wisc.edu.

an isolated incident or a state- or region-wide problem. Also, let us know if you have some good news to share on a strategy or a tip to help people obtain the coverage and care they need. Contact Nora Foshager at nfoshager@safetyweb.org or (800) 585-4222, ext. 204 with information.

New Operations Memo

The Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) recently released an Operations Memo regarding Continuously Eligible Newborns (CEN) and Emergency Medicaid (EMA). Previously, babies born to recipients of EMA were not eligible for CEN status, but now, due to this change, mothers on EMA can now submit the paperwork for CEN status and be considered eligible. Babies with CEN status can have certain health care-related costs covered by MA within the first year of life.

For complete information on this change, please [click here](#) to read Operations Memo 07-56: Continuously Eligible Newborns and Emergency Medicaid.

BadgerConnect: Paving the Way to Health Care

BadgerCare Plus BadgerConnect is a proposed health care portal from the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) intended to increase access to affordable health care for people in Wisconsin in a number of ways. If it is approved, it is scheduled for implementation in January 2009.

First, BadgerConnect would expand coverage under BadgerCare Plus to childless adults under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) who are currently ineligible for Medicaid/BadgerCare programs.

Second, BadgerConnect would expedite enrollment in HMOs by allowing members to enroll immediately rather than waiting eight weeks. This would eliminate the need for fee-for-service.

Third, BadgerConnect would evaluate health plans and place them into tiers based on quality. Higher quality plans will be placed in higher tiers, and the higher the tier, the better the cost-sharing advantages for enrollees. This will encourage enrollees to choose higher-tiered plans while at the same time encouraging quality of plan.

Fourth, BadgerConnect would allow businesses to contribute directly to the health care needs of their employees, which has never been done in Wisconsin.

Resources

- **Energy Services, Inc. of Dane County:** The home energy plus program can help with high energy costs. To apply for energy assistance, call (608) 267-8601. Grants are available, as well as home weatherization. For those who are homebound due to physical disability, a worker will visit the home. ESI also provides emergency after-hours assistance – just call! Call ESI for more information on qualifying and applying.
- **Kaiser's Consumer-Directed Health Care (CDHC) Resources:** A narrated slide tutorial on principles and different models of CDHC ([click here](#)), its companion issue module on the latest research and policy analysis on CDHC ([click here](#)), and the results of Kaiser's Health Poll Search on CDHC ([click here](#)) are all available from the Kaiser Family Foundation.
- **Knowledge Path** is a web-based guide from the Maternal and Child Health Library at Georgetown University that points to current, high-quality resources on caring for CYSHCN. Separate sections list resources on specific aspects of care and development, such as adolescent transition, advocacy, financing, and screening. To access this resource, please [click here](#).
- **Wisconsin First Step** can help you find resources for children birth to 21 with special needs. Staff are on-hand 24 hours a day to answer calls and can provide follow-up and materials on specific diseases or conditions. Call (800) 642-7837 with questions. Language interpretation and TTY services are available. You can also email wispubhealth@mch-hotlines.org or visit their website at www.mch-hotlines.org.

Finally, BadgerConnect would help those who do not qualify for Medicaid to access other affordable health care choices.

Over the remainder of the budget process, the legislature will be making important choices about the future of health care in WI. Call or email your state legislator and let him/her know what you think of BadgerConnect. For information on how to contact your legislator or who represents you, go to <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/> and click on "Who represents me?" or call the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-362-9472. You could also write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. If you feel strongly about this proposal, make your voice heard!

For more information on BadgerCare Plus, please [click here](#). Currently, there is no information available online from DHFS on the specifics of BadgerConnect. Please look in future issues of the HWW Update for more information as it becomes available.

NEWS: Health Care in the WI Budget

Follow the links below for recent news of health care measures in the state budget:

[Family health care threatened by budget proposal – Jim Dick for the Wisconsin Radio Network, September 28](#)

[New Report Shows that Assembly Republican Health Care Plan Primarily Benefits the Wealthy - Citizen Action of WI Press Release, September 26](#)

NEWS: Health Care in Wisconsin

Use the links below to access recent news on health care and coverage in Wisconsin:

[National Report Attests to Health Plan Accountability, Improvement and Cost Savings - WI Association of Health Plans Press Release, September 26](#)

[Employer wellness programs gain popularity - Guy Boulton for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, September 14](#)

NEWS: Covering Children

Follow the links below for recent news on children's care and coverage:

[With a jab at Dems, Bush signs stopgap spending bill - Jennifer Loven for the *Associated Press/Houston Chronicle*, September 29](#)

[Senate Passes Children's Health Plan - Robert Pear for *The New York Times*, September 28](#)

[EDITORIAL: State's uninsured kids are losers in this game](#)

Links of Interest

Catalyst Center – A national center dedicated to improving health care insurance and financing for CYSHCN. www.hdwg.org/projects/catalyst.htm

The Commonwealth Fund – A private foundation working toward a high performance health system. <http://www.cmwf.org>

Cover the Uninsured Week – CTUW 2007: April 23-29. <http://covertheuninsuredweek.org>

Family Voices – Speaking on behalf of CYSHCN. www.familyvoices.org

Kaiser Family Foundation – A non-profit, private operating foundation focusing on the major health care issues facing the nation. www.kff.org/

Parent to Parent USA – A national non-profit organization committed to assuring access and quality in Parent to Parent support across the country. www.p2pusa.org

If you have any suggestions on websites or other resources that you have found helpful, please send them to Nora Foshager at nfoshager@safetyweb.org.

- *Green Bay Press Gazette*, September 27

State lawmakers divided on child health insurance vote - Elynn Ferguson for the *Green Bay Press Gazette*, September 26

Congress Set for Veto Fight on Child Health Care - by Robert Pear and Carl Hulse for *The New York Times*, September 25

House passes kids' insurance bill despite veto threat - Richard Wolf for *USA Today*, September 25

EDITORIAL: Gunfight at the S-Chip Corral – *The New York Times*, September 25

Baldwin votes to renew kids' coverage: Says Bush veto threat is wrong - Press Release from the Office of Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, September 25

SCHIP is compassionate legislation – Press Release from the Office of Congresswoman Gwen Moore, September 25

Obey says fight over children's healthcare program shows president's warped budget priorities - Press Release from the Office of Congressman Dave Obey, September 25

Ryan: Flawed health legislation relies on bait and switch tactic - Press Release from the Office of Congressman Paul Ryan, September 25

Deal in Congress on child health - David Stout for *The New York Times*, September 21

Bush vows to veto expansion of children's insurance plan - David Jackson for *USA Today*, September 21

Veto threat angers Republicans - Christopher Lee and Jonathan Weisman for the *Washington Post*, September 21

VIDEO: Take it from R.L... Kids Need Coverage! - from Cover the Uninsured

NEWS: Medicaid in the News

Follow the links below to access recent news articles on Medicaid:

U.S. Rule Limits Emergency Care for Immigrants - Sarah Kershaw for *The New York Times*, September 22

Medicaid drug rule may hurt recipients - Richard Wolf for *USA Today*, September 16

NEWS: Health Care Reform

Follow the links below to access recent news articles on reforming the health care system:

Contact Us

We need your help to develop content and tips for our bi-weekly HWW Update. Please let us know about your ideas, events, or success stories. Email your suggestions to nfoshager@safetyweb.org or call (800) 585-4222 ext. 204. If you would like to submit news and information for future HWW Updates, please send it to the attention of Nora Foshager. All submissions should be limited to 150 words.

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[California closes in on universal health-care plan](#) - Karl Vick for the *Washington Post*, September 24

[Senate passes mental health parity bill](#) - Frederic J. Frommer for the *Associated Press/San Francisco Chronicle*, September 18

[Mayo Clinic recommends universal health insurance plan](#) - Milt Freudenheim for *The New York Times*, September 15

[San Francisco to offer care for uninsured adults](#) - Kevin Sack for *The New York Times*, September 14

NEWS: Health Care & the 2008 Election

Use the links below to navigate recent articles on health care in the 2008 election process:

[Edwards: Limit Frivolous Lawsuits](#) - Joan Lowy for the *Associated Press/the Long Island Newsday*, September 24

[EDITORIAL: The Battle over Health Care](#) - the *New York Times*, September 23

[OPINION: Clinton, Democrats ignore cost of health care plans](#) - John Torinus for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, September 22

[More pledges to cure health care](#) - Mike Glover for the *Associated Press/Houston Chronicle*, September 21

[Clinton presents plan for universal coverage](#) - Perry Bacon Jr. and Anne Kornblut for *the Washington Post*, September 18

[Wary of past, Clinton unveils a health plan](#) - Patrick Healy and Robin Toner for *The New York Times*, September 18

[OP-ED: Hillary Clinton, From Revolution to Evolution](#) - David Brooks for *The New York Times*, September 18

[Clinton unveils details of her health care plan](#) - Richard Wolf for *USA Today*, September 17

NEWS: Health Care Costs and Access

Click on the links below to access recent news articles on health care costs and access:

[Wal-Mart to widen \\$4 drug program](#) - Julie Appleby for *USA Today*, September 28

[Health Plan Overhauled at Wal-Mart](#) - Michael Barbaro for *The New York Times*, September 19

[Wal-Mart expands health coverage](#) - Julie Appleby for *USA Today*, September 18

[Health insurance premiums vault past inflation](#) - Julie

Featured Link: Wisconsin Council on Children and Families

The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families (WCCF) is a private, non-profit, non-partisan statewide organization with offices in Madison, WI. The WCCF is a multi-issue child and family advocacy organization, providing research, policy analysis, public education, and advocacy that lead to improved outcomes for children in many areas, including health. The WCCF believes that children need strong voices representing them, and so are committed to using research, policy analysis, and public education to raise voices to make every kid count. For more information on the WCCF, please visit www.wccf.org/.

■ CKSN Corner ■ Covering Kids with Special Needs



Mental Health Resources

On the Move: Helping Young Adults with Serious Mental Health Needs Transition into Adulthood

Students with Psychiatric Impairments

Parenting with a Mental Illness: Programs and Resources Guide

Mental Health Services for Children, Adolescents and Families

Tunnels and Cliffs: A Guide for Workforce Development Practitioners and Policymakers Serving Youth with Mental Health Needs

Mark Your Calendars Now: 5 Excellent Conferences in 2007 and 2 in 2008!

NEW **Second Annual Respite Conference** – This event will be held October 3 from 8:30am-2:15pm in Janesville. For more information, contact Family Respite Care Services at 608-758-0956 or family.respite@sbcglobal.net.

NEW **Creating Meaningful Community Life for Everyone: Finding and Funding a Pragmatic Path to Supported Employment** – This event will be held October 9 from 8:00am-3:30pm at the Four Points by Sheraton Milwaukee Airport. This workshop is for educators, families, guardians, service providers, social

Please note that ABC for Health, Inc. has moved. Our new address:

ABC for Health, Inc.
32 N. Bassett St.
Madison, WI 53703-2606

workers, and other who are supporting individuals challenged by autism and who are willing to work for a meaningful community life for everyone. For more information, please contact ASSEW at (414) 417-9345 or assew@assew.org.

***NEW* 18th Annual Children Come First Conference – “Bringing It Back Home: Caring for Children in Our Communities”** - This event will be held October 18-19 at Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Professionals who work with emotional and behavioral disorders and parents of those children come together to learn creative ways to strengthen families, advocate for children and families, and become community leaders for the support and treatment of children with complex needs. [Click here](#) to register online by October 5.

1st Annual Wisconsin Self-Determination Conference: Organizing for Self-Directed Supports – This event will be held November 5-7 at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells. The goal of the conference is to increase the presence and participation of people with disabilities in our neighborhoods. A brochure will be coming in September. Contact Steve Stanek at (608) 266-8337 or stanesj@dhfs.state.wi.us with questions.

Medical Home Summit: Small Steps, Big Changes – This event will be held November 15, 2007 at the Country Springs Hotel in Waukesha. A Medical Home is a patient-centered quality improvement model for providing care for children, youth, and adults with special health care needs. This summit will examine specific QI improvement strategies being utilized by practices, managed care organizations, and state systems. Registration is FREE. For the conference brochure and other Medical Home information, contact Sharon Myhre at (608) 265-8955 or myhre@waisman.wisc.edu or [click here](#).

5th Annual Wisconsin Transition Conference – This event will be held January 22-23, 2008, at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Stay tuned for complete conference and registration information coming in November 2007.

***NEW* 2008 Rehabilitation and Transition Conference: Blast Off ... To the Stars!** – This event will be held April 9-11, 2008, at the American Club in Kohler. This annual event is Wisconsin's premiere conference for rehabilitation and transition professionals. [Click here](#) for conference updates.

ABC for Health, Inc. is a Wisconsin-based, nonprofit public interest law firm dedicated to linking children and families, particularly those with special health care needs, to health care benefits and services. ABC for Health's mission is to provide information, advocacy tools, legal services, and expert support needed to obtain, maintain, and finance health care coverage and services.

Notice of Funding Available

Below are links to various notices of available funding:

[The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)

[The National Center of Medical Home Initiatives](#)



Support Our Efforts!

You can donate to ABC through our website. Follow the link below, then click on the button in the lower left-hand corner of our homepage that says "Make a Donation." We greatly appreciate your generous donations, which go towards helping to maintain ABC for Health, Inc. and our many projects, including HealthWatch Wisconsin. Thank you!

www.abcforhealth.org

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