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A Project of ABC for Health, Inc.  
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## Meetings by Region

**Southern:** February 4, 9:00-11:00am. Harambee Center, 2202 S. Park St, Madison. Contact Nora Foshager at (608)261-6939 ext. 204 or [nfoshager@safetyweb.org](mailto:nfoshager@safetyweb.org) with questions.

**Southeastern:** February 13, 10:00am-12:00 pm. Aurora

# HealthWatch Wisconsin Update

Please click here to view the PDF version on our Web site.

## Online Registration Now Open for 1st Annual HWW Conference

### Conference Theme: BadgerCare Plus

You can now register for the HWW Conference online at [www.healthwatchwisconsin.org](http://www.healthwatchwisconsin.org)! Click on the 'Annual Conference' link to be directed.

The 1st Annual HealthWatch Wisconsin Conference will take place on Tuesday, March 11 from 8:30am-4:30pm at the Best Western Inn on the Park in Madison. [Click here](#) to view the "Save the Date" card. As promised, there is a deep discount for registered members of the HealthWatch Wisconsin Organization - you pay less than half the regular conference attendance fee!

If you are not yet a registered member of the HWW Organization, it's not too late. You can register for membership at the same time as you register for the conference and still qualify for the greatly reduced membership fee. If you are unsure of your membership status, feel free to call Nora at 1-800-585-4222, ext. 204.

Visit [www.healthwatchwisconsin.org](http://www.healthwatchwisconsin.org) for more information on the Annual Conference and HealthWatch Wisconsin.

## New FPL Guidelines for 2008 Online

The new Federal Poverty Level Guidelines for 2008 have been released and can be accessed by [clicking here](#). Also, [click here](#) to see the Federal Register with the 2008 Guidelines.

## Case Advisory: BadgerCare Plus Backdating

Family Services, 3200 W. Highland Blvd, Milwaukee. Contact Leah Jepson at (414) 286-6608 or [ljepso@milwaukee.gov](mailto:ljepso@milwaukee.gov) or Tanya Atkinson at [Tanya.Atkinson@ppwi.org](mailto:Tanya.Atkinson@ppwi.org) with questions.

Children's Health Access for the Special and Equal (CHASE) Meeting – February 21, 11:30am–1:30pm. ARC of Milwaukee, 7203 W. Center St. Contact Brad Holman at (414)266-3189 or [bholman@chw.org](mailto:bholman@chw.org) with questions.

**Western:** March 11, 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](mailto:rmarsh@co.chippewa.wi.us) with questions.

### Coalitions Under Development

**Barron:** Contact Mike Rust at (715) 485-8525 or [MikeR@co.polk.wi.us](mailto:MikeR@co.polk.wi.us) with questions.

**La Crosse:** Contact Lindsey Schwarz at (608) 785-5841 or [Schwarz.lindsey@co.la-crosse.wi.us](mailto:Schwarz.lindsey@co.la-crosse.wi.us) with questions.

**Polk:** Contact Mike Rust at (715) 485-8525 or [MikeR@co.polk.wi.us](mailto:MikeR@co.polk.wi.us) with questions.

### Other Meeting Notices

**Live Webinar - Improving Handoffs of Care: Impact on Patient Society** - February 12, 11:00 am-12:00 pm. This one-hour Web-based seminar is part of the *Safer Health Care for Kids* program, designed to serve as a comprehensive resource for physicians, allied health professionals, administrators, parents, and caregivers. These

Don't wait a day. Apply now. Get online. Call in. Go in. Fax it in.

Beginning February 1, BadgerCare Plus changes the face of eligibility for the several programs generally referred to as "Family Medicaid." One dramatic change could catch families and providers by surprise. Under BadgerCare Plus, most eligible individuals can only get coverage for health care costs incurred as far back as the first day of the month of application. Under Medicaid and Healthy Start and AFDC-Medicaid, eligible individuals could get coverage that would "backdate" all the way to the first day of the month three months before the date of application. (So, under most Medicaid programs before BadgerCare Plus, if you incurred health care costs in January, you could wait until the last day of April before you absolutely had to file an application.)

No more. With a couple of exceptions, if you incur health care costs in January, you must file your BadgerCare Plus application before the end of January. These individuals can still get the three-month backdate:

- Pregnant Women (except for Prenatal Care)
- Children, parents and caretakers with family income at or below 150% FPL
- Youth exiting "out of home" care (such as foster care)

We should note that this reduction in backdated coverage mostly affects children over the 150% of FPL limit and that the policy change actually increases backdated coverage for one group of individuals. Parents and caretakers with incomes above the old AFDC levels and below 150% FPL can now backdate 3 months. These individuals only had the backdate period to the beginning of the month of application under BadgerCare.

Pay close attention as the end of the month approaches! When an uninsured individual incurs health care costs at or near the end of a month, it will be important to file an application immediately. Health care providers who assist patients with health care financing may want to find out from local Economic Support Agencies what policies might be in place for their agency to accept applications from, say, an emergency room on a weekend at the end of a month.

### Submit Your Case and Policy Questions

If you have a case or policy question that you would like answered by the staff at ABC for Health, please email [info@safetyweb.org](mailto:info@safetyweb.org) with your question and we will investigate it. If it is a common concern, we will report our findings in a subsequent issue of the HWW Update.

### Featured Link: The BadgerCare Plus Handbook

Answers to many questions about BadgerCare Plus can be found

webinars are available on various topics within pediatric patient safety. For more information and to register by February 11, [click here](#).

**Mental Health Parity Action Day** - February 20 at the State Capitol. Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton declared Mental Health Parity Action Day 2008 as a day for mental health consumers, advocates, and others interested in mental health parity to gather at the State Capitol to support the mental health parity bill, SB 375. The day's activities include advocacy training, a networking lunch, and appointments with legislators. To join the effort, visit [Lt. Gov. Lawton's Web site](#) or [click here](#) to read more about SB 375. For more information about the day and transportation, contact Shel Gross at 608-250-4368 or email [shelgross@tds.net](mailto:shelgross@tds.net).

**Milwaukee County Executive Candidate Forum** - 7:00-8:30 pm, March 4 at Summit Place, 6737 W. Washington St., Milwaukee, in the 1st floor conference room. This forum will feature State Senator Lena Taylor and County Executive Scott Walker. The questions will focus primarily on health and human services, with some time for questions from the audience. A flyer will be available soon.

## 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

in the program's handbook. You can view the handbook directly online, or you can click on the 'PDF Versions' link at the top of the screen to save a printable copy to your computer. To access, visit [www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/bcplus](http://www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/bcplus).

On February 1, 2008, the current Medicaid Eligibility Handbook, found at <http://www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/meh/>, will become obsolete. Even though this book will no longer be used to determine eligibility status, it will not be removed from the web, since staff may still need to refer to old policy.

The new Medicaid Eligibility Handbook will contain elderly, blind and disabled policies only, and will become effective February 1, 2008. The link to the handbook will be announced January 31, 2008.

## BadgerCare Plus: Archived Webcasts Available Online

Learn about BadgerCare Plus, the newly expanded program beginning February 1, 2008. Visit the DHFS Website to peruse the catalog of archived Webcasts. Many more are scheduled for the rest of January, so check back periodically for new information.

Steps to view an archived Webcast: (1) Visit <http://dhfs.wi.gov/webcast>. (2) Click on the link that says 'View the Catalog of our Webcasts.' (3) Browse the program catalog or search for a specific presentation using the search engine. (4) Click on the presentation you wish to view.

## NEWS: Health Care in Wisconsin

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

- [Appleton's Steve Kagen plans health care move - J.E. Espino for the \*Appleton Post-Crescent\*, January 28](#)
- [BadgerChoice idea earns kudos - Brad Bryan for the \*Leader-Telegram\*, January 24](#)
- [Doyle proposes insurance changes - Guy Boulton and Stacy Forster for the \*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel\*, January 24](#)
- [OPINION: Market will ease health care costs - John Torinus for the \*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel\*, January 19](#)
- [Senator: All should have health coverage like state officials - Charlie Mathews for the \*Manitowoc Herald Times Reporter\*, January 18](#)
- [Grants will help insure kids enrollment in state plan pushed - Judith Davidoff for the \*Capital Times\*, January 17](#)
- [Governor Doyle Awards \\$447,142 to 32 Organizations to Sign Up Kids for BadgerCare Plus - Press release from DHFS, January 16](#)
- [One-house wonders - David Callender and Judith Davidoff for the \*Capital Times\*, January 15](#)

– 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](mailto:wispubhealth@mch-hotlines.org) or [visit their website](#).

## **Links of Interest**

**Catalyst Center** – A national center dedicated to improving health care insurance and financing for CYSHCN. [www.hdwg.org/](http://www.hdwg.org/)

**The Commonwealth Fund** – A private foundation working toward a high performance health

- [OPINION: We would do well to adopt health system like Canada’s - Jack E. Lohman for the \*Capital Times\*, January 11](#)
- [A radical idea for the health-care system - Rachel Westberg for the \*Chetek Alert\*, January 9](#)

## **NEWS: Health Care & the 2008 Election**

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

- [Report: Dems likely to boost health care - Kevin Freking for the \*Associated Press/Seattle Post-Intelligencer\*, January 23](#)
- [Democratic hopefuls agree on Medicare as a healthcare model - Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar for the \*LA Times\*, January 21](#)
- [American Medical Association to spend \\$15 million during election year on its campaign on behalf of the uninsured - Bruce Japsen for the \*Chicago Tribune\*, January 17](#)
- [Rudy Giuliani blasts Democrats on health care in New Smyrna - Josh Hafenbrack for the \*South Florida Sun-Sentinel\*, January 16](#)

## **NEWS: Health Care Reform**

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

- [California Governor's Plan for Health Care in Trouble - Jesse McKinley for the \*New York Times\*, January 28](#)
- [Health-care Ideas Had Few Allies in Congress - Christopher Lee for the \*Washington Post\*, January 28](#)
- [Employers put health coverage in workers' hands - Julie Appleby for \*USA Today\*, January 23](#)
- [Insurer to offer quality rewards - M. William Salganik for the \*Baltimore Sun\*, January 16](#)

## **NEWS: Covering Children**

Follow the links below to access recent news articles on children's care and coverage:

- [States promoted broader coverage for children in 2007, but report that a declining economy coupled with lack of SCHIP reauthorization and new federal rules now compromise efforts to reduce the number of uninsured - Press release from the Kaiser Family Foundation, January 28](#)
- [House fails to Override Health Bill Veto - Kevin Freking for the \*Associated Press/San Francisco Gate\*, January 23](#)

system. <http://www.cmwf.org>

**Cover the Uninsured Week** –  
CTUW 2008: April 27-May 3.

<http://covertheuninsuredweek.org>

**Family Voices**– Speaking on  
behalf of CYSHCN.

[www.familyvoices.org](http://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/](http://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](http://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](mailto:nfoshager@safetyweb.org).

## NEWS: Health Care Costs & Access

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

- [Health plan faces fines of \\$1.33 billion - Lisa Girion for the \*LA Times\*, January 29](#)
- [EDITORIAL: Vetoing History's Responsibility - the \*New York Times\*, January 28](#)
- [More Hitting Cost Limit on Health Benefits - Christopher Lee for the \*Washington Post\*, January 27](#)
- [Report seeks one-stop source for health info - Julie Steenhuisen for \*Reuters\*, January 24](#)
- [Rising health care costs put focus on illegal immigrants - Richard Wolf for \*USA Today\*, January 22](#)
- [Bush's health agenda-partisan standoff - Kevin Freking for the \*Associated Press/San Francisco Chronicle\*, January 21](#)
- [Businesses fight plans to ensure health care - Julie Appleby for \*USA Today\*, January 16](#)

## NEWS: Medicaid

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

- [Medicaid change to cost state schools - Amy Hetzner for the \*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel\*, January 20](#)

## ■ CKSN Corner ■ Covering Kids with Special Needs



## Free Membership to Online Parent Resource Center

College Parents of America has created a resource center to help parents and youth prepare for college and navigate the changes that they both go through. They are currently offering a free, one-

year membership providing access to the "members only" sections of their Web site, including access to an online library of newsletters, an "Ask the Experts" service and publications on topics such as "Tax Planning for College Costs" and "Solving the College Acceptance Dilemma." For more information and to sign up for your free membership, visit

[www.collegeparents.org/PACER](http://www.collegeparents.org/PACER).

## 2007-2008 Statewide Autism Training - Wisconsin DPI

- April 8-9, 2008: Advanced Level, Addressing Challenging Behavior - Madison

For more information, contact Jeanne Hook at [jeanne.hook@dpi.state.wi.us](mailto:jeanne.hook@dpi.state.wi.us) or 608-266-3928 or Lynn Boreson at [lynn.boreson@dpi.state.wi.us](mailto:lynn.boreson@dpi.state.wi.us) or 608-266-1218, or visit <http://dpi.state.wi.us/sped/autism.html>.

## Mark Your Calendars Now

### Four Excellent Conferences in 2008!

- **2008 Marquette Law School Public Service Conference: Leaping the Gaps for Children with Special Needs** - This event will be held February 29 at the Alumni Memorial Union at Marquette University. This conference allows attendants to participate in an interactive case study and learn how they can help children with special health care needs "leap the gaps" between school, social service, health and justice systems. [Click here](#) to visit the conference Web site for more information and to register by February 18.
- **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.
- **ASW 2008 Annual Conference** - This event will be held May 1-3, 2008, at the Regency Suite/ KI Convention Center in Green Bay. The full conference program will be available in February. [Click here](#) to register by March 21.
- **International Conference on Self-Determination** - This event will be held May 27-29, 2008, at the Renaissance Center in Detroit, Michigan. A pre-conference workshop will be held on Tuesday, May 27 from 9:00 am-4:00 pm. The topics will be: Income and Asset Development and International Communication and Information Sharing. This conference is dedicated to laying a foundation across disability and aging for moving publicly funded systems of



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.



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ABC offers a secured, private entrance to the studio space for your privacy.

For more information or to rent the ABC Studio, please call Brynne McBride: 608-261-6939 ext. 210.

## 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](http://www.abcforhealth.org)

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