



A Project of ABC for Health, Inc.
www.healthwatchwisconsin.org

HealthWatch Wisconsin Update

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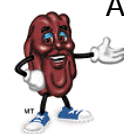
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Case Tip: Continuously Eligible Newborns

Newborns born to women covered by BadgerCare Prenatal and Emergency Services Medicaid will soon be eligible for Medicaid for the first year of life as Continuously Eligible Newborns. This is due to a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) reversal in policy that had required babies born to undocumented women to supply citizenship and identity documentation before being eligible for Medicaid.

Many babies are facing serious delays and breaks in coverage due to application of the citizenship and identity documentation requirements. These requirements will still apply at the babies' one-year Medicaid review. The change in policy came about due to pressure from legislators and advocacy groups. It is anticipated that the Department of Health and Family Services will issue an Operations Memo on this change in policy soon.

Heard It Through the Grapevine...



ABC for Health has heard that a family was denied an opportunity to submit new information as part of the record of an administrative hearing for a Katie Beckett denial. According to report, the hearing officer determined that no additional information would be allowed as part of a hearing process and reasoned that the family would have to reapply and submit the new information.

If this is indeed happening, ABC for Health disagrees with this interpretation of Medicaid policy. Families should be allowed to add information to the hearing record until it is closed. In fact, families should be able to request that the record remain open after a hearing to add new information that may not be available in time for the hearing.

...What Have You Heard?

Have other advocates, case workers, or families encountered this problem? Let us know if you have heard of similar

HealthWatch and Covering Kids and Families – Meetings by Region

Southern: May 7, 9:00-11:00am. Harambee Center, 2202 S. Park St, Madison. Contact ABC for Health's Annie Trimberger at (608)261-6939 ext. 203 or atrimberger@safetyweb.org with questions.

Southeastern: April 11, 10:00am-12:00 pm. Aurora Family Services, 3200 W. Highland Blvd, Milwaukee. Contact Tracy Wymelenberg at (414)449-4767 ext. 144 or tracyw@communityadvocates.net with questions.

Children's Health Access for the Special and Equal (CHASE) Meeting – April 19, 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: April 12, 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: May 8, 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.

incidents so we can investigate this issue further.

Please contact ABC for Health if you have recently learned something that bothers you and would like to find out if it is 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 Annie Trimberger at atrimberger@safetyweb.org or (800) 585-4222 ext. 203 with information.

In My Opinion: Bush Rejects Health Care Working Group Suggestion

Andy Heidt

Meaningful health care reform faces many obstacles, especially the Bush administration. The Citizen's Health Care Working Group (the group) reported last fall on the outcomes of an information and idea-gathering process on strategies to extend care and coverage to more Americans. Congress established the group under the leadership of Senators Ron Wyden and Orrin Hatch.

The group heard from 6,500 people at 84 meetings across the country and included a panel of sixteen experts that gathered ideas and examined options to reform the health care system. Their recommendations did not include a funding plan, but the proposal made headway on some specific needs faced by all Americans. The group came to a consensus on a plan that included guaranteeing health coverage for specific check-ups and treatments, and protecting patients from high medical expenses. The report was, as we say, a start.

Yet, the Bush administration ignored the report for over five months before rejecting it. President Bush remained consistent and maintained his tin ear when it comes to our nations needy, by completely rejecting the working group report. Instead, he choose to stick to his own plan for health care "reform," which includes tax deductibility of premiums and medical savings accounts. "My way or the highway" applies to more than Iraq for Mr. Bush.

The President's myopic strategy is not even a "band-aid" approach, since it ignores most low and moderate income people with chronic conditions or who are trapped in higher risk small groups. What about a much needed emphasis on prevention and wellness? Nada! President Bush's outright rejection of this proposal is not surprising, since he has shown little understanding or aptitude in developing a plan to address the health care coverage crisis in this country.

Fortunately, as the old song goes, "the times they are a-changing," and new leadership is emerging to put a priority on health care coverage for all Americans. It's about

Other Meeting Notices

- **Cover the Uninsured Week 2007:** Mark your calendars for CtUW 2007, April 23-29. Visit www.covertheuninsured.org for more information.
- **Imagine...Everybody Works! – A Collaborative Conference on Employment and Autism:** May 10-11. Hyatt Regency, Columbus, OH. For more information, contact Teresa Grossi at tgrossi@indiana.edu.
- **20th Annual National Maternal and Child Health Leadership Conference:** May 15-16, Hilton Garden Inn, 4070 East Main St., St. Charles, IL, 60174. Focus on making change happen by translating research into maternal and child health (MCH) public health practice. For more info, visit www.uic.edu/sph/mch/mch_leadership_conference.htm.
- **Annual Public Health Conference:** May 23-24, Radisson Paper Valley Hotel, Appleton. For more info, please visit www.wpha.org.
- **Family Voices National Conference:** May 24-26, Washington, D.C. Join Family Voices in our nation's capital for a celebration of 15 years of family/professional partnerships and accomplishments! Working together as families, partners, and communities, we can move forward the agenda of health care and build a better future for our children. On-line registration available at www.familyvoices.org beginning March 12.

time...

*Let us hear what you think! Send us your opinion.

*The opinions expressed here are not published as the opinions of ABC for Health, Inc or HealthWatch Wisconsin.

Alert: EMA coverage for Dialysis Threatened

According to a source at EDS, the federal government stated that dialysis services are not urgent/emergent but in fact are chronic, so they don't qualify under Medicaid for Emergency Services. Some providers have been getting paid for these recipients for a long time and are not aware that as of 2/12/07 their claims will be denied, regardless of date of service.

If a serious chronic condition such as kidney failure can only be treated in an ER, services will ultimately cost more and result in inefficient treatment. Medical professionals need to mobilize to communicate to legislators and the Department Secretary the importance and necessity of ongoing dialysis to keep someone from organ failure.

Legislative Hotline: Toll-free: 1-800-362-9472

Joint Finances Committee Announces Schedule of Budget Hearings Across State

These hearings offer you the opportunity to express your opinion about the proposed budget. Hearings will be held in the following cities on the following dates, times, and locations:

April 4, 12:00-5:00pm – Prairie du Chien

(Prairie du Chien H.S. Auditorium, 800 E. Crawford St.)

April 11, 12:00-5:00pm – Rhinelander

(Nicolet College Learning Resource Center Theatre, 5634 College Dr.)

April 12, 10:00am-4:00pm – Green Bay

(National Railroad Museum Lenfestey Center, 2285 South Broadway)

If you attend a hearing, you do not have to speak. You can submit a prepared written statement or fill out an attendance card with your comments.

You can access the Budget in Brief and budget documents by individual agencies through Governor Doyle's website; please [click here](#).

NEWS: Health Care in Wisconsin

Use the links below to access recent news on health care

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.

and coverage in Wisconsin:

Health care cost is country's top worry, survey says - Rick Romell for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, March 23

Insurers pursue small employers - Guy Boulton for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, March 17

NEWS: Health Care Reform

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

Clinton Touts Universal Health Care Plan - Mike Glover for the Associated Press/*San Francisco Chronicle*, March 26

Dems talk up health care - Glenn Thrush for the *Long Island Newsday*, March 25

At Forum, Democrats Differ on Health Care - Dan Balz for the *Washington Post*, March 25

Bush's Health Care Plan Not Most Effective: Study - done by Reuters for *The New York Times*, March 19

President Rejects Health Care Proposal - Kevin Freking for the Associated Press/*Long Island Newsday*, March 14

NEWS: Medicaid in the News

Follow the links below for recent articles on Medicaid:

Immigrant children won't lose Medicaid - Jennifer Byrd for the Associated Press/*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, March 20

EDITORIAL: The Medicaid Documentation Mess - *The New York Times*, March 19

Medicaid helps, but getting it can be hard - Julie Appleby for *USA Today*, March 14

NEWS: Health Care Costs

Use the links below to navigate recent health care cost-related news articles:

NPR Examines Physician's Interactions With Health Insurers - Kaiser Network Daily Reports, March 27

Report: Even the insured have trouble paying bills - Julie Appleby for *USA Today*, March 22

NEWS: The Uninsured

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

Census overstated number of uninsured - Stephen Ohlemacher for the Associated Press/*Houston Chronicle*, March 23

Who's uninsured in 2007? It's more than just the poor -
Julie Appleby for *USA Today*, March 14

NEWS: Access to Health Care

Use the following links to access recent articles on access to health care coverage and services:

Unions take closer look at health-care stories; AFL-CIO affiliate compiling health-care horror stories as it puts the issue under the microscope - Anya Sostek for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, March 22

NEWS: Mental Health

Click on the links below to access recent news articles on reforming mental health care:

EDITORIAL: Fairness for Mental Health - *The New York Times*, March 24

Proposals for Mental Health Parity Pit a Father's Pragmatism Against a Son's Passion - Robert Pear for *The New York Times*, March 19

Featured Link: Income Maintenance Advisory Committee (IMAC)

Did you know that there is a state committee that examines issues and concerns related to the function of income maintenance programs (including Medicaid and BadgerCare) that operate at the county level? Take a look at the minutes and agendas to see what issues are being discussed and what policy solutions are being considered.

<http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/em/imac/minutes/minutes.htm>

Upcoming WI Health Care Reform Panels

Speakers at these panels will address the various proposed health care plans (The Wisconsin Health Security Act, The Wisconsin Health Care Partnership Plan, and Wisconsin Health Plan) and will answer questions from the audience. The following panels are now scheduled:

April 18, 8:00-10:00am – Kenosha
(Gateway Technical College)

April 21, 9:00-11:00am – Combined Locks
(Christ the King Church, 601 S. Washington St.)

April 21, 12:30-2:30pm – Neenah
(First Presbyterian Church, 200 Church St.)

April 21, 3:30-5:30pm – Oshkosh

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 Annie Trimberger at atrimberger@safetyweb.org.

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

atrimberger@safetyweb.org or call (800) 585-4222 ext. 203. If you would like to submit news and information for future HWW Updates, please send it to the attention of Annie Trimberger. All submissions should be limited to 150 words.

HealthWatch Wisconsin Update Staff

Bobby Peterson

bobbyp@safetyweb.org

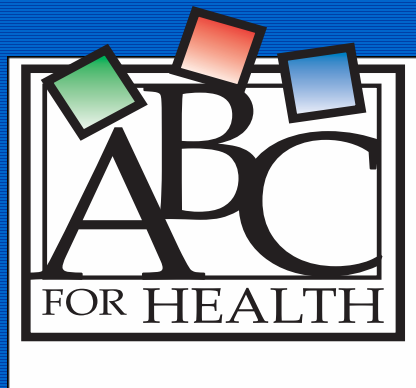
Annie Trimberger

atrimberger@safetyweb.org

Nora Foshager

nfoshager@safetyweb.org

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.



(608)261-6939

info@safetyweb.org

(St. Paul UCC)

April 24, 7:00-9:00pm – Milwaukee

(Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun, 2020 W. Brown Deer Rd.)

April 26, 7:00-9:00pm – River Falls

(1st Congregational UCC)

April 26, 7:00-9:00pm – Lodi

(venue TBD)

More panels are scheduled; you can find the dates and times in upcoming issues of the HealthWatch Wisconsin Update. If you have any questions about the panels, please contact Kristin Settle of the Institute for One Wisconsin at (414) 481-4323 or Kristin@onewisconsinnow.org.

■ CKSN Corner ■

Covering Kids with Special Needs



Self-Directed Services (SDS) Informational Mtgs.

Family Care is expanding throughout Wisconsin. SDS is an exciting part of this program. In SDS, people have control of their lives and choose their own services. The Self-Determination Wisconsin project is presenting a series of informational meetings about SDS. The meetings are for people who get long-term care services, as well as their families, service providers, advocates, and others who want to learn more about SDS.

The first session will be in Kenosha on April 11. Most of the meetings will occur in May. To view a complete schedule of the meetings, to learn more about them, and to obtain a registration form, please [click here](#). To aid planning efforts, registrations are requested if you plan to attend.

The Self-Determination Wisconsin project is part of the Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities' current five-year State Plan. To read more about this part of the plan, please [click here](#).

A Gathering of Youth 2007

A Gathering of Youth is a hands-on conference planned by and for high school-aged youth with disabilities. This conference is held every year in conjunction with the Circles of Life conference. Only Youth will participate in the sessions – NO parents allowed! Registration is limited to 25 participants and is first come, first served. You may only register if this will be your first or second time coming to the conference. Registration deadline for Gathering of Youth is March 23. To find out more, please call Kirsten Engel at (608) 242-8484 ext. 228.

ABC for Health to Present at 2007 Circles of Life Conference

ABC for Health staff will present the two following topics:

Finding Success in Applying for Katie Beckett and Children's Long Term Support Programs: Will discuss Medicaid/Children's Long Term Support programs for CYSCHN, their differing eligibility requirements, preparing for the Functional Eligibility Screen, and rules and legal strategies to appeal denials.

Medical Home Raising: Will orient attendees to Medical Home services and will gain insights on developing family and service provider partnership and events to promote the concept.

The conference will be held April 26 and 27 at the Madison Marriott West in Middleton. Visit www.wfv.org/circle for more information.

Mark Your Calendars Now: Two Excellent Conferences in 2007!

Kalahari Autism Safari: Journey Through the Spectrum

– The conference will be held May 10-12 at the Kalahari Resort and Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells. Click here to download a registration form. For more information, visit www.asw4autism.org.

1st Annual Exceptional Parents EXPO – This event will be held May 17 from 4:30-8:30pm at the Ponzio Center, Northland College in Ashland. Please contact Deanna Yost at (715) 682-7171 ext. 35 or dyost@nhnorth.com with questions or for more information.

Support Our Efforts!

Thank you to all who participated in Community Share's Annual Share-A-Meal on March 13. If you missed Share-A-Meal, you can still 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. Thank you!

www.abcforhealth.org