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The Impact of Medicaid and BadgerCare Cuts on Real People in Wisconsin
HealthWatch Wisconsin Releases Public Testimony on BadgerCare and Medicaid

Madison, WI – HealthWatch Wisconsin released initial video footage of public hearings conducted recently to focus attention on the possible impact of BadgerCare and Medicaid cuts on the 1.2 million recipients of services in Wisconsin. HealthWatch Wisconsin sponsored two days of public hearings at a downtown Madison hotel, drawing hundreds of people to listen, learn, and for some, to share their stories and the stories of loved ones. HealthWatch Wisconsin staff was on hand to record participant’s testimony. “Our participants shared stories about what coverage programs like BadgerCare Plus mean to them, to their grandchildren, nephews, patients, neighbors, and friends. People were fearful and angry with the dramatic changes proposed to health coverage programs in the Administration’s budget and budget repair bill,” stated Public Interest Attorney Bobby Peterson. “Many views were candid, many were emotional, and most left those of us in the audience with a sense of urgency to help policymakers understand how important and life preserving Medicaid and BadgerCare are to people in Wisconsin.”

The public hearings coincided with the 4th Annual HealthWatch Wisconsin Conference, convening policy-makers, health care advocates, patient navigators, policy experts, the media, and others from the public health workforce to learn about the new direction of health coverage programs in Wisconsin. Immediately preceding the hearing was a presentation by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Secretary Dennis Smith and the Division of Access and Accountability Administrator Brett Davis. Davis stated, “I appreciate you holding these listening sessions.” Smith and Davis, however, did not stay for the testimony. Peterson continues, “We will send Secretary Smith and Administrator Davis a complete copy of this testimony. We hope they listen to it, as it tells an important story of Medicaid and BadgerCare in Wisconsin. Secretary Smith indicated that he would listen to what the people of Wisconsin have to say. We also intend to send additional testimony as well as information on ways the programs can run more efficiently.”

Please see www.safetyweb.org/healthwatchwi/publicHearing.html to view the HealthWatch Wisconsin public hearings.

HealthWatch Wisconsin is a project of ABC for Health, Inc. ABC 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.

