



**PRESS RELEASE
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HealthWatch Wisconsin's Watch List

HealthWatch Outlines the Top Health Coverage Stories to Keep an Eye on This Fall

Madison, WI – “Who isn’t waiting to see what Wisconsin will submit in its waiver request,” asked Bobby Peterson, public interest attorney and Executive Director of ABC for Health, Inc (ABC). Discussion of the federal waiver request from Wisconsin’s Department of Health Services (DHS) headlined the list of topics HealthWatch Wisconsin will closely monitor. “The details of the waiver are very important to patients in Wisconsin.” More importantly, Peterson says, is that “DHS promised to let people know the details before they submitted a waiver. We will hold them to that—hold them accountable to their transparency.”

HealthWatch Wisconsin, a project of ABC for Health, evaluated a watch list called the “WatchDog Days of Summer.” HealthWatch summarized these in an episode of the popular web cast, “The HealthWatch WatchDog,” produced by ABC for Health and made available to the media and the public at this link: <http://96.60.62.171/mediasiteabc/Viewer/?peid=17735f660f724213913b8b227ca7a1f9>

HealthWatch is also watching the distribution between public health and medical education and research money from the Blue Cross Blue Shield conversion fund. This topic was re-introduced by a newspaper article that mischaracterized the fund, identifying it as a source of University research support. “We know ‘blurring the line’ between public health and research too much shifts money toward the research power base of the two schools and not public health. Public health needs resources now,” noted Peterson.

The watch list also includes the Commissioner of Insurance Ted Nickel’s office as they work on federally-funded rate review and insurance exchange projects, as well as legislation that would give rule-making authority to the Commissioner. “We want to improve access to health care and coverage in Wisconsin. It’s something that’s part of our fiber at HealthWatch Wisconsin and ABC for Health. We’re going to keep watching and working on these issues and more in the coming months,” concluded Peterson.

Finally, the watch list includes issues like United HealthCare Medicaid HMO work and contracts in Polk County, and keeping track of the possible impact of Wisconsin child support and birth cost recovery policies on infant mortality in Wisconsin.

ABC for Health 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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