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The HealthWatch Wisconsin Update Newsletter

Your Source for Strategies, Suggestions & Stories on Accessing Health Care and Coverage in Wisconsin.

July 1, 2010

Vol. 6 No. 12

HealthWatch Wisconsin

A Project of ABC for Health, Inc.

A statewide membership assuring a more competent, coordinated public health workforce.

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A New Membership Year Begins TODAY!

July 1st Marks the Start of the New HealthWatch Wisconsin Membership Year!

Thank you to each of you who have joined or renewed membership in HealthWatch Wisconsin. Today is the first day of the 2010-2011 HealthWatch Wisconsin Membership Year!

To thank you for responding so quickly to the membership announcement, the staff of HealthWatch Wisconsin has arranged for a PRIZE DRAWING! Two lucky individuals will receive either GREEN BAY PACKER TICKETS or a MADISON GETAWAY! Watch your inbox on July 2nd to learn if you are a lucky winner!



1) Our First GREEN BAY PACKER TICKET PRIZE DRAWING, to be held July 2nd. One lucky winner will receive two indoor deluxe club seat tickets to the very first pre-season game being played at Lambeau Field:

Packers v. Cleveland Browns Saturday, August 14, 2010, 7:00PM

2) A One-Night Stay in the Park Suite, Inn on the Park, Capitol Square Madison, WI! One individual will be able to relax in beautiful Madison, right across from the Capitol, weekly farmer's market, summer Concert on the Square, and more!

It's Not Too Late To Join HealthWatch!

The 2010-2011 membership year has begun, but it's not too late to join! Take 5 minutes to complete and return our [MEMBERSHIP FORM](#) to make sure you are connected to great materials, information and events.

Join as an individual member for \$30

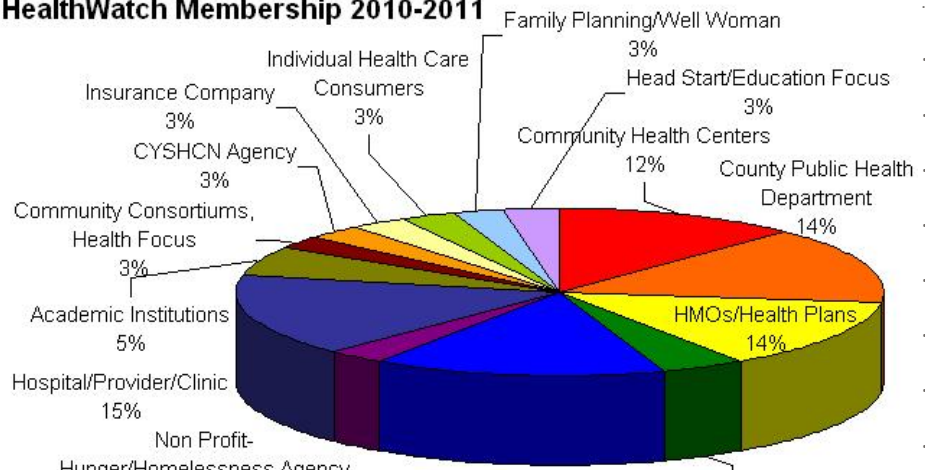
- OR -

Get together with co-workers and join as an organization for only \$120

Who Else is a Member??

HealthWatch Wisconsin Staff members have plotted membership in HealthWatch Wisconsin for those who have joined or renewed by June 15. Take a look at who's a member this year:

HealthWatch Membership 2010-2011



Local HealthWatch Coalition Meetings:

Barron: TBA, 12:00-1:00pm. Barron County Workforce Resource, Inc., 331 S. Main St., Ste. 6, Rice Lake. Contact [Mike Rust](#) or (715) 485-8525 with questions.

Chippewa: TBD, 10:45am-12:00pm. Chippewa County Courthouse, Room 121, 711 N. Bridge St., Chippewa Falls. Contact [Rose Marsh](#) or 1-800-400-3678

with questions.

Dane: Picnic for July! Date

TBD. Next Meeting: August 2, 9:00-11:00am. Harambee Center, 2202 S. Park St., Madison. Contact [Erin McBride](#) or (608) 261-6939, ext. 211 with questions.

Dunn: TBD, 11:45am-1:00pm. Red Cedar Medical Center (Education Center), 2321 Stout Rd., Menomonie. Contact [Patrick Rebmam](#) or (715) 233-7309 with questions.

Eau Claire: September 2, 2010, 12:00-1:30pm. Luther Hospital Cafeteria, Dining Room 1, 1221 Whipple St., Eau Claire. Contact [Lou Kelsey](#) or (715) 834-4455 or [Pat Perkins](#) or (715) 839-4718 with questions.

Milwaukee: July 14, 9:30am-11:30am. Aurora Family Services, 3200 W. Highland Blvd., Milwaukee. Contact [Kari Lerch](#) or (414) 449-4777, ext. 145 or [Ginger Dzick](#) at (414) 443-4527 with questions.

Milwaukee CHASE (Children's Health Access for the Special and Equal): TBA, 11:30am-1:30pm. ARC of Milwaukee, 7203 W. Center St., Milwaukee. Contact [Brad Holman](#) or (414) 266-3189 with questions.

Polk: August 12, 10:30am-12:00pm. Polk County Health Department, Conference Room A & B, 100 Polk County Plaza, Balsam Lake. Contact [Mike Rust](#) or (715) 485-8525 with questions.

Coalitions Under Development

La Crosse: Contact [Lindsey Schwarz](#) or (608) 785-5841 with questions.

Tri-County Coalition: Winnebago, Calumet and Outagamie Counties. May 25, 9:00-10:00am, Goodwill Community Center, Menasha Room. Contact [Susan Garcia Franz](#) for more information.

Coming Soon: Immigrant Health Coverage Workshops

Stay tuned for an announcement about our **Immigrant Health Coverage Trainings** for 2010 that will include the latest information on expansions in health coverage under the new CHIPRA legislation. Weigh in on where you would like to see this spring training as we plan the details for this event. Call Brynne at (608)261-6939 ext 210 or email: bmcbride@safetyweb.org.

OCI Bulletin

The Office of the Commissioner of Insurance has released a new bulletin (June 25) to All Insurers Authorized to do Business in Wisconsin. The bulletin summarizes a whole slew of newly

Joining or Renewing your HWW membership today gives you:

- Access to 12 publications valued at over \$200 including the NEW "My Guide to National Health Reform," available Fall 2010.
- Access to reduced trainings, workshops, and conferences on health care hot topics, including online trainings through the HWW Training Portal site.
- A voice in a state-wide advocacy organization that works toward quality and accessible health care for people across Wisconsin!

Join an organization committed to unifying the public health workforce, with emphasis on teaching, training, and information sharing! The membership year runs July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011. Questions? Call HealthWatch Wisconsin staff for more information: (608)261-6939 ext. 210.

Save the Date: October 28th HealthWatch WI Mini-Conference

We're looking ahead to October: Mark your calendar for HealthWatch Wisconsin's:

The Changing Landscape of Insurance after National Health Reform ***a full day of workshops***

Thursday, October 28, 2010

9:00am-4:30pm

Inn on the Park

22 S. Carroll Street, Madison, WI 53703

Reduced registration cost will be available for members of HealthWatch Wisconsin! [Join HealthWatch Wisconsin](#) to take advantage of savings throughout the year! Mini-Conference sessions will be led by regulators, policy makers, and advocates in Wisconsin, including Wisconsin's Commissioner of Insurance Sean Dilweg; Representatives from Wisconsin's Health Insurance Risk Sharing Plan; Bobby Peterson and Attorneys from ABC for Health; members of the Wisconsin Legislature; and more!

HealthWatch Wisconsin will debut its new publication "My Health Reform Guidebook for Wisconsin" at this event! The publication is included FREE for members of HealthWatch Wisconsin!!

Continuing education credits will be offered for attorneys, social work, and other professions. A light breakfast and lunch and conference CD will be included in your reservation cost! Further details will be released as confirmed. See you in Madison in October!

Welcome, New HealthWatch Wisconsin Council Members

The three-year term for each new HealthWatch Council member officially begins on July 1, 2010, to coincide with the new membership year of HealthWatch Wisconsin. Joining the Council are: **Julie Baryluk**, Polk County Health Department; **Susan Garcia-Franz**, Well Woman Coordinator/Planned Parenthood; **Jodi Joyce**, Group Health Cooperative; **Dr. Tom Schlenker**, Madison Dane County Public Health; and **Jennifer Winter**, Managed Health Services. Help us welcome these diverse public health leaders! Visit the Council's [webpage](#) for a full listing of Council members and members of the Executive Committee.

The HealthWatch Wisconsin Council serves as the advisory committee for the HealthWatch Wisconsin Organization and helps guide the project's activities to achieve our goals. The Council provides leadership and advice to HealthWatch Wisconsin as we work to transform the public health landscape and increase access to care and coverage for people in Wisconsin through training, education, and collaborative partnerships.

Opportunities to Develop New Coalitions!

Attention Local Public Health Departments:

Opportunities exist to form new, sustainable HealthWatch Coalitions. ABC for Health, Wisconsin's Department of Health Services, and HealthWatch Wisconsin are helping to support a sustainable, interconnected network of new community-based HealthWatch Coalitions to promote access to and retention of health care coverage for children. Coalitions are strongly encouraged to include local health departments as the key stakeholder. Your County can create a coalition to develop a sustainable plan to connect and maintain family connections to health coverage, care, and resources.

Getting Started:

Start by identifying community partners and leaders, including representatives from hospital systems, Head Start, parents, Birth-to-3 Coordinators, public health nurses, economic support workers, school nurses and counselors, advocates, employers, and members of the faith community. Then, watch for an RFP! The

enacted legislation: 2009 Wisconsin Acts 146, 165, 218, 275, 282, 285, 342, 343, 344, 346, and 369. See the summaries [here](#).

Updates from DHS

Medicaid Eligibility Handbook:

A new version, Release 10-02 of the Medicaid Eligibility Handbook was made today. Many of the sections have earlier effective dates. Here is a list of the most important changes, by section:

- 5.10.1--MAPP Introduction
- 15.3.14--Payments to Native Americans
- 16.1--Asset Intro
- 16.6.7--Ho Chunk Tribal Trusts
- 16.7.6--Treatment of Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) Entrance Fees
- 16.81.4--Home Equity over \$750,000
- 17.1--Divestment Introduction
- 17.2.1--Divestment Definition
- 17.3.1--Look Back Period
- 17.4--Exceptions
- 17.5--Penalty Period
- 17.6--Multiple Divestments
- 17.10.1--Life Estates Introduction
- 17.10.5--Purchase of a Life Estate in the Home of Another Person
- 17.11--Annuities
- 17.12--Promissory Notes
- 17.14--Both Spouses Institutionalized
- 17.17--Undue Hardship

Operations Memos

Below, find Wisconsin's Department of Health Services (DHS) Operations Memos (Ops Memos) or information updates, with brief summaries and/or rationales drawn from the information provided by DHS. Any "Opinions" highlighted below are interpretations of HealthWatch Wisconsin staff and Update editors. Follow the links to view the actual memos:

Operations Memo 10-51:

FoodShare Eligibility for EBD Households (Released July 1)

New Policy: *Income:* Effective immediately, households that include an elderly or disabled member with gross household income over 200% of the FPL must be tested for FoodShare using the regular SNAP rules. Under the regular SNAP rules, these households have no gross income limit, but must have net income that does not exceed 100% FPL. *Assets:* Households tested under the regular SNAP rules must have countable assets at or below \$3000. The [FoodShare Handbook Chapter 4.4](#) has been updated with the current policy regarding when to count or exempt assets.

Operations Memo 10-50: CARES Screen for WPBD

Updates (Released July 1)

New Policy: As described in [DFES ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO 10-05](#), the

Wisconsin Department of Health Services and HealthWatch Wisconsin will issue a call for proposals to invite coalitions to compete for funding. We will prioritize coalition development for low-enrollment, under-performing or health disparity locations across Wisconsin. In fact, HealthWatch Wisconsin will prioritize coalition development where local health departments take a leading role. After funding, HealthWatch Wisconsin will continue to help with ongoing technical consultation and leadership training. We will be looking for areas that can DEVELOP and SUSTAIN a coalition, after the start-up assistance is complete.

Federal High Risk Pool Accepts Applications July 15

Wisconsin is expected to begin taking applications for the [Federal Health Insurance Risk Sharing Plan](#) (Federal HIRSP) on **July 15, 2010 for an August 1 effective date**. Administered through the existing Wisconsin HIRSP authority, the Federal HIRSP plan will have different eligibility and application requirements from what we know as the existing State HIRSP plan. To qualify for the Federal Pool, a person must:

1. Be a citizen or national of the United States, or be lawfully present; and
2. Have a preexisting medical condition; and
3. Been uninsured for at least 6 months before applying for the HIRSP Federal Plan.

Keep your eye on the [HIRSP website](#) for new details as they become available. Be sure to visit the [Frequently Asked Questions Tab](#) for the interaction of BadgerCare Plus Core Plan and Basic Plans with Federal HIRSP.

Blue Cross Blue Shield Conversion Funds: The Saga Continues!

Under the terms of a March 2000 order issued by the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance, Blue Cross Blue Shield United of Wisconsin converted from a not-for-profit hospital service insurance corporation to a for-profit, publicly held stock insurance corporation and provided \$630.4 million to endowments held by the Medical College of Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin (UW) School of Medicine and Public Health. The Legislative Audit Bureau has conducted an evaluation of the Wisconsin Partnership Program and the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Program.

In a [full report](#) issued May 12, 2010, called "[Medical Education, Research, and Public Health Grants](#)," the auditors included the following recommendations for the Medical College of Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health to:

- Ensure that project proposals include clear objectives before funds are awarded
- Improve project monitoring, including clarifying when grantees must notify program staff of modifications to project objectives
- Ensure that grant applicants disclose all external funding on their supplanting forms
- Clarify conflict-of-interest policies

In addition, the Audit Bureau offers the following recommendations ([on page 93 of the report](#)):

- The Medical College of Wisconsin include its unallowable cost policy in the guidelines for medical education and research grants
- The Commissioner of Insurance work with the Foundation and both medical schools to clarify several policy issues in order to ensure that funds are spent in a manner that is consistent with the intent of the order.

Public Health Money at Stake:

The Wisconsin United for Health Foundation Board (WUHF), the committee enlisted to oversee the conversion funds, will be meeting on July 15! We are calling on the public health community to let their voice be heard at this meeting! There is a lot of money out there; the conversion funds entrusted to the medical schools in Wisconsin hold significant opportunities for the public health of Wisconsin. The Legislative Audit Bureau has certainly raised questions about the administration and distribution of these funds. HealthWatch Wisconsin has weighed in with recommendations of its own, and is prepared to testify at the July 15 meeting. [Watch the most recent edition](#) of the HealthWatch WatchDog Policy Talk Show for insight into this topic.

Attend the Meeting:

Wisconsin United for Health Foundation Board Meeting
July 15, 2010 1:00pm-4:00pm
Madison's Concourse Hotel, 1 W. Dayton St., Madison, WI 53703

BadgerCare Plus Basic Plan: Coverage Begins!

July 1st is the first day of coverage for those individuals on the BadgerCare Plus Core Plan waiting list eligible and able to apply for the Basic Plan on June 1. The first month of coverage is conditioned on the

Department is moving forward with a number of changes to the W-2 program that are required as part of the Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) between the Department of Children and Families and the US Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights (OCR). One of the primary areas of focus in the VCA is to ensure that W-2 agencies provide reasonable accommodations to persons who have disabilities as required under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Operations Memo 10-49: Policy Changes for W-2 Trial Jobs (Released July 1)

New Policy: The purpose of this memo is to explain changes in policy and employer reimbursement for W-2 Trial Jobs.

Operations Memo 10-48: Disability Determination for PACE and Partnership (Released June 28)

New Policy: Individuals under age 65 who are eligible for certain categories of full-benefit Medicaid that do not require a disability determination (e.g., BadgerCare Plus Standard Plan, Well Woman Medicaid, Adoption Assistance Medicaid or Foster Care Medicaid etc.) are required to obtain a disability determination in order to be enrolled in the Home- and Community-Based Waivers under Group A eligibility rules. Family Care policy changed in September 2009 ([see Ops Memo 09-51](#)) to allow individuals eligible for these Medicaid programs to enroll without a disability determination. PACE and Partnership policies are now being aligned with Family Care.

Provider Updates

[Durable Medical Equipment Place of Service Codes for Members Residing in a Facility for Developmental Disabilities](#)

Facilities for developmental disabilities (FDD), are reimbursed through their daily rate for durable medical equipment (DME) reasonably associated with the care of residents, such as manual wheelchairs. Reimbursement for some specialized DME items, such as powered mobility equipment and custom wheelchair positioning systems, is not included in the daily rate. These items may be separately reimbursable when medically necessary and when prior authorized by ForwardHealth.

[July 2010 Preferred Drug List Review and Other Pharmacy Policy Changes](#)

This ForwardHealth Update provides an overview of the changes to Preferred Drug List (PDL) drug classes. Providers may refer to the following resources on the Pharmacy page of the [ForwardHealth Portal](#) for the complete list of preferred and non-preferred drugs for drugs covered by the benefit plan: The Wisconsin Medicaid, BadgerCare

acceptance of the first premium payment. Details of enrollment and eligibility are summarized below:

Monthly Premiums and Enrollment Dates

- All members must pay a premium of \$130 per person, per month for coverage in the Basic Plan.
- Enrollment in the Basic Plan always starts on the 1st of the month. Which month coverage starts depends on when you pay the first premium.
- If your first premium is received before 4:30 p.m. on the 15th of the month, your enrollment will start on the first of the next month.
- If your first premium is received after 4:30 p.m. on the 15th of the month, enrollment will be delayed a month.
- *For example:* If you sign up and pay your first premium between June 1 and June 15 by 4:30 p.m., your coverage will start July 1. If you sign up and pay your first premium between June 15 at 4:30 p.m. and June 30 by 4:30 p.m., your coverage will begin on August 1.
- Ongoing Monthly Premiums — Each month members will get a premium payment slip in the mail. Your full premium payment will be due on the 5th of each month for coverage the next month. These premiums can be paid through the mail using the premium payment slip.
- Late Payment/No Payment — If you fail to pay your monthly premium in full by the 5th of the month, your coverage will end and you will not be able to re-enroll in the Basic Plan for 12 months.

How To Enroll

To enroll in the Basic Plan, you must be on the Core Plan Waiting List. It's not too late to join the growing waiting list! To do so, either "[Apply for Benefits](#)" online or call the Enrollment Services Center at 1-800-291-2002. You will get a letter to confirm you have been placed on the list.

If you are *already* on the Waiting List, you don't need to do anything right now. In a few weeks, you will receive a fact sheet and instructions on how to enroll in Basic. Members

Once Enrolled in the Basic Plan, Individuals Will...

- Stay enrolled in this plan as long as premiums are paid and they are on the Core Plan waitlist and meet the Core Plan rules.
- Be invited to enroll in the Core Plan as openings are available based on funding and in the order in which they applied.
- Not be enrolled in an HMO.
- Potentially be asked to verify income and/or insurance coverage information.
- Be asked to report changes.

Remember!

For more information on BadgerCare Plus Basic, don't forget to check out the [HealthWatch Wisconsin Training Site](#). Registration is simple, and we have a **FREE** training webcast available for viewing after a 5 question pre-quiz on the BadgerCare Plus Basic Program.

BadgerCare Plus Core Plan Renewals

Help Find Core Plan Enrollees; Help Them Renew!

Individuals who registered for BadgerCare Plus Core Plan in June of last year are coming up for renewal!

- Current enrollees will get a letter in the mail that will indicate "it is time to renew" Core Plan benefits.
- Renewal applications must be submitted in the "renewal month" or the following month
- If not submitted in time, the individual will have to apply for the waiting list.
- Step 1: Start the Renewal Application within the first 5 days of the renewal month.
- Step 2: Submit the Renewal Application by the end of the renewal month or the following month
- Step 3: 30 days to pay the \$60 fee
- Step 4: 30 days to provide the required verifications
- NOTE: Even if all the steps are completed "in time," any steps completed after the month following the renewal month will create a gap in eligibility.

Tips for Individuals with Core Plan Renewals:

- Members should get their physical before the end of their renewal month
- Make sure address is current
- Change address either by calling the Enrollment Service Center (ESC) or by filling out a report in your "MyACCESS" account
- Check the due date of renewal on the MyACCESS account page
- Renewal notices should have been mailed 45 days before its due date
- If you have any questions about the renewal process, please start with looking at the renewal chapter in the [ACCESS Handbook](#).

Plus Standard, and SeniorCare Preferred Drug List-Quick Reference; The BadgerCare Plus Core Plan Brand Name Drugs-Quick Reference.

Links of Interest

Medicaid Primer

The Kaiser Family Foundation has released an updated version of their **Medicaid Primer**, which provides an overview of Medicaid and its components, and now also discusses Medicaid's role in Health Reform. Check out this valuable resource [here](#).

Employee Benefits Security Administration Page

The Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), a division of the United States Department of Labor, recently updated their home page. Check it out [here](#).

Calls for Submissions and Volunteers

[ABC for Health](#) is seeking legal interns for Fall 2010! All interested volunteers, students with public interest fellowships or work-study awards are encouraged to apply by sending an email with a cover letter and resume to bmcbride@safetyweb.org.

DHS Resources: BadgerCare Plus Core Plan:

- [To Apply Online \(ACCESS\)](#)
- [Core Plan Publications Page](#)
- [ForwardHealth Enrollment and Benefits Booklet](#)
- [BadgerCare Plus Policy Handbook \(Core Plan is Ch. 43\)](#)

Phone Support

- For questions from **applicants: The Enrollment Services Center: 1-800-291-2002**
- For questions from **advocates/professionals: (608)261-9305 or 1-888-415-2116**. (DHS has asked that this number not be shared with the public.)

For Milwaukee Residents--the new Milwaukee Enrollment Services (MiES) contacts:

Phone: 1-888-947-6583 (voice) 711 (TTY)
 Mail : Milwaukee Enrollment Services Center (MiES), P.O. Box 05676, Milwaukee, WI 53205-0676
 FAX: (414) 438-4580
 In Person: 1220 W Vliet Street -or-

How the new renewal dates were determined:

- A Core Plan member **with Foodshare** will have a renewal date synced with their next Foodshare renewal.
- A Core Plan member **without Foodshare** will have a renewal date of 1 year + 1 month from when their benefits were confirmed (the previous year).
- A Core Plan member **with Family Planning Waiver** benefits, the FPW renewal date will be synced with the new Core Plan renewal date.

Wisconsin's Department of Health Services will be running a list of Core Plan member's renewal dates available to community access point partners. To receive this list, email [Claire Smith](mailto:Claire.Smith) with your name, organization name, and community access point number. The list will be sent out when it is available, within the next month or so.

3 Things You Can Do TODAY To Improve Health Literacy!

What is Health Literacy?

"When is my next appointment scheduled?" "How frequently should I take my medication?" "Is my visit covered by my insurance or am I eligible for this hospital's charity care program?" Understanding the answers to these frequently asked questions is a measure of health literacy. Many hospital patients do not understand what professionals consider "basic health care information." We all can do a better job of talking in **plain language** and making sure our **patients understand**.

According to the Institute of Medicine report *Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion*, literacy skills are the strongest predictor of an individual's health status--more than age, income, education level, employment status or racial or ethnic group. An estimated 36% of Americans have poor health literacy skills and cannot use a graph to determine a healthy weight range, or read labels to identify substances that interact with over-the-counter medications. Multiple state and national studies link higher health care costs to low literacy skills. Between \$106 and \$238 billion is lost each year on health care costs due to a problem with communication methods and the ability of adults to obtain, process and understand health information. Providers in Wisconsin lose \$3.4 billion annually due to health literacy problems. In Dane County alone, lack of health literacy costs the health care system more than \$433 million.

What Can You Do Today?

- Slow down, and ask questions!
 - Although it may seem inconvenient at the time, asking questions and taking a few extra minutes to understand will be a time-saver and money-saver for the patient, hospital, and more in the long run.
- Utilize strategies and tips included in toolkits and resources such as the ones listed here, in order to fill in gaps in communication that may cause unnecessary confusion and frustration:
 - Wisconsin's new [statewide website](#) on health literacy issues.
 - National Institutes of Health's [MedlinePlus](#): A web site for patients and their families and friends. Produced by the National Library of Medicine, it "brings you information about diseases, conditions, and wellness issues in language you can understand."
 - Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ): [New Health Literacy Toolkit!](#)
 - Dane County's [Literacy Network](#), a broad collection of community members working together to advance the cause of literacy in Dane County
- Spread the word to others about the importance of health literacy!

Coalition Roundup!

Local HealthWatch Coalitions have been busy! Below is a brief look at some events, announcements, and news from around the State. Coalition contacts are listed in the sidebar if you have questions on a story or would like to follow up with the coalition directly.

Dane County HealthWatch will be exchanging a July Coalition Meeting for a Summer Picnic! Join us for an outing to the Madison Mallards Game! Click Here to view the invitation and details. For more information, please contact [Adam VanSpankeren](#).

Dane County HealthWatch may be moving its meeting place from its long-time home at the Harambee Center after the summer - stay tuned for more details on this potential development.

The **Milwaukee County HealthWatch Coalition** is taking some time at their next meeting to plan and strategize the direction of their coalition. Dane County and Tri-County HealthWatch Coalitions recently did this, as well. We encourage all of the Coalitions to take some time out to reassess their focus and direction, to ask questions like "Who's not at our meetings?" "Who should be at our meetings?" "How do we get them here?" The more people in attendance, the greater the connectedness, the more successful the Coalition.

Barron County HealthWatch is doing a presentation about BadgerCare Plus and the Core Plan's relationship to COBRA for the Workforce Resource Office in Rice Lake on July 21. **Polk County**



UMOS Job Center Southeast, 2701 South Chase Ave. -or- clients can call 211 for information on a community access point in their area

Emails:

dhsmiles@wisconsin.gov - for new applications, verifications, etc.

dhsmileschanges@wisconsin.gov - for scanning changes (HTF only scanning changes from cases)

dhsmilescustomerservice@wisconsin.gov

- Note: This is an email for advocates only: use to email MIES with advocate questions.

Contact Information in Milwaukee County:

- [Contact Information Fliers](#)
- [Online Order Form](#)
- [Referral Sheet](#)
- [Guide to Applying](#)

Previous Issues of the Update:

[View our Update Newsletter Library Online!](#)

Recent HealthWatch WatchDog Episodes:

Did you miss an episode? [Visit our WATCHDOG LIBRARY to view videos](#) from 2008-present.

Lifeline and Link-Up Services!

Telecommunications assistance is available for many in Wisconsin! If you receive health benefits, housing, FoodShare or other public program assistance, and are under 135% FPL, you may qualify. To learn more, watch the new video filmed by ABC for Health on Lifeline and Link-Up services. Please [click here](#) to view the video.

Rent the ABC for Health Studio

ABC for Health has developed a web casting studio with state of the art technology to reach a mass audience in the comforts of their own homes or offices. Agencies and organizations are invited to rent this studio space. [Click here](#) for more information.

Support Our Efforts!

On behalf of the staff and students at ABC for Health, thank you for being a subscriber to the HealthWatch Wisconsin Update and WatchDog. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to ABC for Health, to keep

HealthWatch will be doing a similar presentation, to be scheduled for early August. Also, Polk County HealthWatch is working on a Free Clinic, and Polk County HealthWatch members are preparing to get involved in some direct advocacy and case work.

CASE TIP: Reconciling New Health Coverage Laws with Health Reform Provisions

Michelle's Law: Six Months Later...

Michelle Morse, a Plymouth State University student, took a full schedule of college classes even after she was diagnosed with colon cancer *just* to keep her health insurance. Her struggle generated powerful federal legislation to keep dependent children from losing group health coverage through a parent if they drop out of school because of illness. What started as "HB 37," an amendment to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), soon became more familiarly known as "Michelle's Law." Effective January 1, 2010 for calendar year group health plans, the Law protects college students on a medically necessary leave of absence or reduced schedule from being kicked off their parent's insurance plan.

But, with national health reform including dependent coverage up to age 26, will Michelle's Law soon become obsolete?

Michelle's Law will be largely pre-empted by new regulations under Health Reform, (the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) which requires plans to provide continuous eligibility for all children under age 26 on family plans, regardless of their schooling or dependent status. To make sure there are no gaps in coverage for families, group health plans will continue to operate as they are right now—adhering to provisions under Michelle's Law until the dependent coverage at age 26 rules go into effect for plan years after Sept. 23, 2010.

Once dependent coverage is the rule of the land, "student status" will be a moot point. But where is the confluence of Michelle's Law and Health Reform unclear? We can picture a few scenarios involving adding a dependent back to a employer-sponsored plan. (The editors of the Update will keep a watch and share scenarios with you as they play out.)

Keep in mind: *Wisconsin's* dependent coverage law requiring health insurance policies to cover eligible young adults up to age 27. The law applies to individual health and group health benefit plans and a self-insured plan of the state, or a county, city, village, town or school district, including limited scope plans, such as vision and dental plans. However, the law does not apply to non-state regulated, self-funded coverage plans, which officials say make up roughly 40 percent of Wisconsin's insurance. The statute went into effect for health insurance policies issued or renewed beginning on Jan. 1, 2010, the same time as the federal act, Michelle's Law.

Grapevine: \$40M in Section 8 Housing and Urban Development Vouchers for People with Disabilities



The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has recently made available \$40 million worth of Section 8 Housing and Urban Development Vouchers for non-elderly people with disabilities. The deadline for submitting an application is **Wednesday, July 7** and applications must be submitted by a Wisconsin Public Housing Authority.

■ **CKSN Corner** ■
Covering Kids with Special Needs



Mark Your Calendars Now Check Out These Excellent Events in 2010!

- **Care in the Community Conference - Wednesday, September 22, 2010.** Radisson Hotel, Wauwatosa, WI. A conference to provide families and providers who care for children and youth with special health care needs with the information and tools they need. For more information, see www.maxishare.com/conferences
- **Midwest Autism Conference - October 10-12, 2010.** La Crosse Center, La Crosse, WI. Join the

projects like HealthWatch Wisconsin sustainable! **To make a donation, please click the donation button** to be re-directed to our PayPal site where you can donate with a credit card.

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To donate via check, please make the check payable to "ABC for Health, Inc.," at 32 N. Bassett St., Madison, WI 53703. We greatly appreciate your generous donations. ABC for Health is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, and your contribution is deductible to the extent allowed by law. **Thank you!**

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Contact Us

Have ideas, events, or success stories to share? [Email your suggestions!](#) All submissions should be limited to 150 words.

HealthWatch Wisconsin Update Staff

[Bobby Peterson](#)

[Adam VanSpankeren](#)

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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UW-La Crosse Continuing Education Department and Chileda, Inc. for a comprehensive conference covering strategies that support individuals on the Autism Spectrum in school, home, and treatment environments. For more information, go to <http://www.uwlax.edu/conted/mac/> or call Karen Langaard to register, 1-866-895-9233.

Wisconsin First Step Help Book 2010 A Directory of Services for Children with Special Needs Directories are now available on-line. Five regional directories are available, each serving specific counties in Wisconsin. Directories are produced in "real-time" with the most up-to-date information provided at the time they are downloaded. For information or assistance in downloading the directories please contact Teresa Halverson or Karen Brandt at [Wisconsin First Step](#); 1-800-642-7837.

Updated Contact Listing (12/10/2009) for the Regional CYSHCN Centers. Questions? [Email Jayne Vargas](#)

Welcome, Katie Kubisiak, Parent Coordinator for Parent to Parent of WI! With several years of experience working with children and families in Wisconsin, Katie brings strong organizational skills and fresh ideas to the program. Visit Parent to Parent of WI [online!](#)

Katie Beckett Program Consultants: [View the Map and Listing of Consultants](#)

Tip Sheets for Siblings of People with Disabilities: [Adolescent and Young Adult Siblings](#); [Adult Siblings](#); [Information for Parents](#)

Champions for Inclusive Communities published a [fact sheet](#) on the 2005/6 National Survey of CSHCN.

NEWS: Health Care in Wisconsin

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

- [New insurance plan coming for people with pre-existing conditions](#) - by Guy Boulton for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, July 1
- [Finding ways to live with mental illness in rural Wisconsin](#) - by David Wahlberg for the *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 29
- [State favors community-based care for rural mental health coverage](#) - by David Wahlberg for the *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 29
- [Should psychologists be allowed to prescribe medications in rural areas?](#) - by David Wahlberg for the *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 29
- [Farmers can tap mental health hotlines for aid](#) - by David Wahlberg for the *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 29
- [American dentists in Wisconsin join forces to raise standards for low-income households](#) - for the *Cosmetic Dentistry Guide*, June 29
- [Guidelines met with dose of skepticism](#) - by Guy Boulton for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, June 27
- [Wisconsin governor optimistic on the availability of health exchanges](#) - by Shamane Mills for *Wisconsin Public Radio*, June 23
- [Obama, Doyle tout benefits of health care reform](#) - by Guy Boulton for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, June 22
- [Doyle: Health reform will save Wisconsin millions](#) - by Corrinne Hess for the *Business Journal of Milwaukee*, June 22
- [Plain Talk: Watch out for health care scams](#) - by Dave Zweifel for the *Cap Times*, June 18

NEWS: Health Care Reform

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

- [Obama administration unveils government health-care Web site](#) - by N.C. Aizenman for the *Washington Post*, July 1
- [High-Risk Insurance Pools Launched](#) - by Janet Adamy for the *Wall Street Journal*, July 1
- [States' responses to health law mixed](#) - by Jennifer Haberkorn for *Politico*, June 29
- [Insurance Pools Readied in Some States](#) - by Robert Pear for the *New York Times*, June 25
- [How Health Reform Will Impact Existing Plans](#) - by Kate Pickert for *TIME*, June 25
- [House Passes Plan to Stop Medicare Cuts to Doctors](#) - by David M. Herszenhorn for the *New York Times*, June 25
- [High-Risk Insurance Pools to Begin Next Month](#) - by Walecia Konrad for the *New York Times*, June 24
- [Name Of Game In Health Care: Cheaper, Better, Faster](#) - by Jennifer Rossa for the *Wall Street Journal*, June 23
- [Obama warns insurance companies not to unnecessarily raise costs](#) - by N.C. Aizenman for the *Washington Post*, June 23
- [White House releases 'patient bill of rights'](#) - by Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar for the *Associated Press* and *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 22

- [How New Health Insurance Regulations Could Affect Some Premiums, Coverage - by Phil Galewitz for *Kaiser Health News*, June 22](#)
- [As Law Takes Effect, Obama Gives Insurers a Warning - by Kevin Sack and Sheryl Gay Stolberg for the *New York Times*, June 21](#)
- [A Health Insurer Pays More to Save - by Reed Abelson for the *New York Times*, June 21](#)

NEWS: Opinion

Click below for editorials and opinion pieces about health care reform:

- [Op-Ed: Announcing HealthCare.gov - posted by Secretary Kathleen Sebelius on the *White House Blog*, July 1](#)
- [Op-Ed: Integrating health care, social services is way to go - by Barbara Quirk for the *Cap Times*, June 29](#)
- [Editorial: Donald Berwick, a nominee well-suited to trim the fat on health care - a *Washington Post* editorial, June 29](#)
- [Op-Ed: Robert Byrd, Living History - Op-Ed Contributors for the *New York Times*, June 28](#)
- [Op-Ed: Health Provider Collaboration Key to Federal Health IT Efforts - for the *iHealthBeat*, June 28](#)
- [Editorial: Painful wait for health care reform - a *San Francisco Chronicle* Editorial, June 27](#)
- [Op-Ed: Health reform at risk without Medicare fix - by Mark A. Newman for the *Cap Times*, June 24](#)
- [Editorial: Health care reform has connected - by the Bemidji Editorial staff for the *Bemidji Pioneer*, June 23](#)
- [Op-Ed: Health-care reform getting more, not less, popular - by Ezra Klein for the *Washington Post*, June 23](#)
- [Op-Ed: Let the Pill Go Free - by Kelly Blanchard for the *New York Times*, June 21](#)
- [Conversations: Mary K. Wakefield on getting ready to double the work of clinics - the *Washington Post*, June 21](#)
- [Op-Ed: Is There a Nurse in the House? - by Theresa Brown for the *New York Times*, June 18](#)

NEWS: Health Care Costs and Access

Click the links below to read the latest news on health care costs and access:

- [Premiums for new 'high risk' pool could be steep - by Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar for the *Associated Press*, July 1](#)
- ['High-risk' medical insurance program set to begin - by Noam N. Levey for the *Los Angeles Times*, July 1](#)
- [Governors to Congress: Restore Extra Medicaid Funds - by Jenny Gold for *Kaiser Health News*, June 30](#)
- [New coverage for uninsured people in poor health - by Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar for the *Associated Press*, June 29](#)
- [Health-care overhaul will improve insurance options for part-time workers - by Michelle Andrews for the *Washington Post*, June 29](#)
- [Want To Know What A Hospital Charges? Good Luck - by Christopher Weaver for *Kaiser Health News*, June 29](#)
- [Americans are treated, and overtreated, to death - by Marilyn Marchione for the *Associated Press*, June 28](#)
- [Rising Costs Spur Increase In Health Savings Accounts - by Michelle Andrews for *Kaiser Health News*, June 22](#)
- [High-deductible health-insurance plans grow more attractive to employers - by Michelle Andrews for the *Washington Post*, June 22](#)
- [For Denied Claims, a Bit of Help in the Health Law - by Michelle Andrews for the *New York Times*, June 21](#)
- [Fate of COBRA subsidy extension in limbo - by Mike Lillis for *The Hill*, June 20](#)

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