



**PRESS ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 14, 2025

Interview: Bobby Peterson, Executive Director ABC for Health, Inc. (608) 261-6939 x201

ABC for Health & HealthWatch Wisconsin Present a Medical Debt Symposium in Appleton

Madison, WI – A “[Medicaid Threats & Medical Debt Symposium](#)” will convene in Appleton on Thursday, May 15, 2025. The event, running from 8:30am-noon at the Appleton Public Library, will spotlight research, policy, and direct client work of nonprofit, public interest law firm ABC for Health, and its education, policy, and outreach subsidiary HealthWatch Wisconsin.

Symposium Highlights:

- ABC for Health will review potential threats to Medicaid & BadgerCare Plus, health coverage programs relied on by almost 1 in every 5 people in Wisconsin. Recent executive orders, budget frameworks, and proposed rules could reduce access to care, increased medical debt, uncompensated care, and worsened health.
- ABC for Health calls medical debt a public health crisis in the Tri-County region (Calumet, Outagamie, & Winnebago Counties), as well as across Wisconsin and the nation. Bobby Peterson, Public Interest Attorney and Executive Director of ABC for Health will share details on the medical debt burden on Tri-County residents, looking at uncompensated care and local hospital financial assistance policies and practices. Nationally, hospitals dedicated on average about 2.3% of revenues to charity care, while Tri-County hospitals struggle to even reach 1%. Speakers will share findings they are compiling into a new report on the region, to be released later this May.
- The 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment in Tri-County will help frame our efforts to promote and improve access to health care coverage and services. To that end, invited guests will share an update on the Tri-County Community Health Improvement Coalition’s work to take stock of the needs of the community.
- ABC for Health will share pre-recorded patient stories of Wisconsin families burdened by medical debt collections, wrongful denials, and credit reporting of debt, assisted through legal help.

The event registration has closed. Media are welcome, but please provide notice if they want to ask questions as we seek to avoid disruptions to our timeline and speakers.

[ABC for Health, Inc.](#), is a Wisconsin-based, nonprofit, public interest law firm that promotes health equity and social justice. ABC for Health helps clients impacted by health disparities due to income, race, or poverty to connect to health care coverage and services in Wisconsin. 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.