WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON
children & families
Raising Voices to Make Every Kid Count

Medicaid at Risk in Wisconsin

Medicaid and the closely related Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) are a partnership between states and the federal government to provide access to health care services for low-income children, pregnant women, adults, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Who does Medicaid help?

5.7 million people live in Wisconsin and Medicaid provides health care coverage for 17% of the population, which is a little over 1 million people. The majority of people who access health care services through Medicaid are children under the age of 19. In WI Medicaid/CHIP covers:
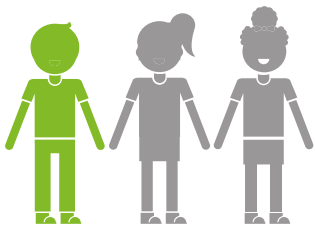
1 in 3 children

1 in 7 non-elderly adults

1 in 2 people with disabilities

What services does Medicaid provide?

Medicaid provides access to important services that help children and families stay healthy:

➕ Primary care services, mental health and substance abuse services, x-rays and lab diagnostics, inpatient and outpatient hospital services, dental services.

➕ Children in WI Medicaid are also eligible for HealthCheck, which ensures that children receive appropriate health and developmental screening and are then guaranteed treatment for any issues that may arise.

Why is Medicaid important?

Medicaid has been in existence for over the past 50 years, and coverage through the program has increased and improved access to:

Insurance, resulting in declines in the uninsured rate

Behavioral health care services.

Dental care for both children and adults—an integral factor in overall health.

Well child checkups that include important developmental screening and preventative health care services.

Health related services for children in schools

Why Is Medicaid a Good Investment?

Kids who have Medicaid:

- Are less likely to die at a young age.
- Are more likely to finish high school and go to college.
- Have fewer visits to the emergency room and hospitalizations as adults.
- Earn more as adults and are more likely to pay taxes.

Non-Elderly Adults who have Medicaid:

- Are more likely to report they are healthy.
- Report improved mental health.
- Have fewer catastrophic medical expenses.

People with Disabilities and Seniors with Medicaid:

- Receive long-term care services that they need to live in their own homes and in the community, which prevents more expensive nursing home and institutional care.
- Can participate in programs that supports their work ability, so they can have a job and pay taxes without losing their long-term care.
- Have access to nursing home and institutional care when necessary.

What's at Risk?

Everything and everyone

The Republican healthcare bill cuts support for Medicaid by 25%, and Trump's budget slashes Medicaid funding even deeper. Together, **both cut Medicaid nearly in half over the next 10 years.** They also drastically change how the Federal government pays for Medicaid, calling for either block grants or per capita caps.

Both would shift costs and risks to our state, taxpayers, health care providers, and Wisconsin kids and families who depend on Medicaid for basic health needs.

Block grants and caps are cuts that:

- Make it harder for Wisconsin to respond to unexpected changes in health care needs or rising health care costs, for things like new drugs or treatments.
- Mean fewer children and families have health care.
- Restrict the services that are covered, like HealthCheck, behavioral health, or dental care.
- Weaken Wisconsin's ability to respond to a public health crisis, like the opioid epidemic.
- Put pressure on other state programs—education, child care, etc.