



Medicaid: A Lifeline for Older Mainers and People with Disabilities

Defeat of the American Health Care Act opens the door to a more hopeful and constructive conversation about how to improve America's health care system. The AHCA would have taken us backwards, costing Maine \$1 billion over the next 10 years,¹ placing older Mainers and people with disabilities particularly at risk as they represent the largest share of Medicaid cost.

We encourage policymakers to come together to make health care more affordable and accessible to all. We are also mindful that some of the most dangerous provisions of the AHCA may reappear in the next weeks and months ahead. It is essential to recognize and appreciate the strong role that Medicaid plays in protecting Maine's older residents and people with disabilities and to understand proposals that would significantly undermine the program.

The assault on Medicaid: How did Congress propose to undermine the program? Right now the federal government pays 64 cents for every Medicaid dollar spent by our state's MaineCare program. It pays more for sicker people with higher health care costs, and less for healthier people with lower health care costs.

This would have changed drastically under the AHCA, which first proposed a block grant and then a "per-capita cap" on people age 65 and older and those with disabilities. Both of these funding schemes would end the federal commitment to pay for care each person needs, ratcheting down overall funding and shifting costs to states and individuals.

Why will older Mainers and people with disabilities be hardest hit if Medicaid is cut?

Of all 50 states, Maine has the oldest average population² and is in the bottom third in median household income.³ Maine's percentage of people with disabilities is also 30% higher than the national average.⁴ Maine's 65 and older population is projected to grow faster than the New England

¹ http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2017/rwjf436077

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/208048/median-age-of-population-in-the-usa-by-state/>

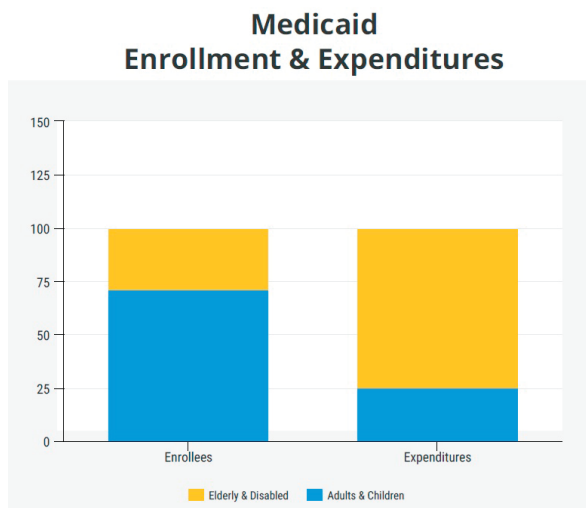
³ <http://kff.org/other/state-indicator/median-annual-income/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

⁴ <http://kff.org/other/state-indicator/disability-prevalence/?currentTimeframe=0&selectedRows=%7B%22nested%22:%7B%22all%22:%7B%7D%7D,%22wrapups%22:>

region or the national average over the next 15 years, growing from 19% to 28% of the state's population by 2030.⁵

Medicaid is especially critical to these groups, because they typically need more and higher levels of care. Mainers age 65 and older and those with disabilities account for just over one-third of MaineCare enrollees but represent two-thirds of all Medicaid costs.⁶

- Nearly 50,000⁷ low-income older Mainers receive health care through Medicaid. Older Mainers represent 18 percent of total Medicaid enrollees, double the national average of 9 percent.⁸
- 63,000 Maine people with disabilities receive health care through Medicaid.⁹
- Two out of three nursing home residents are enrolled in Medicaid. The single largest expenditure for Medicaid is residential services, which includes nursing home and assisted living facilities. Medicaid reimbursed nursing facilities \$291 million in 2016.¹⁰
- Maine has a chronic shortage of direct care workers for both older Mainers and persons with serious mental health or other disabilities, meaning that fewer services are delivered than are needed, shortchanging the amount Maine would receive under the ACHA; moreover 45% of these direct care workers rely on Medicaid for health care. Federal cuts would jeopardize this already too-small workforce.



Any reduction in federal Medicaid funds would have a devastating impact on older Mainers and people with disabilities. It would cause thousands to lose care and threaten the well-being of Maine's most vulnerable residents.

Medicaid: Lifeline for Older Mainers and People with Disabilities is sponsored by Maine Equal Justice Partners, the Maine Council on Aging, Disability Rights Maine and the Consumer Council System of Maine.

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⁵ <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/Publications/DA/Long-Term-Services-Supports-Use-Trends-Chartbook-SFY2014.pdf>

⁶ <http://legislature.maine.gov/legis/opla/CommissionerMayhewOrientationPresentationJanuary2017.pdf>

⁷ Maine Department of Health and Human Services MaineCare Caseload Report July, 2016 with MSP enrollment divided between persons age 65+ and those with disability based on application of percentage of participation established by <https://www.macpac.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/EXHIBIT-14.-Medicaid-Enrollment-by-State-Eligibility-Group-and-Dually-Eligible-Status-FY-2013.pdf>.

⁸ <http://kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/distribution-of-medicaid-enrollees-by-enrollment-group/?currentTimeframe=0&selectedRows=% 7B% 7D>

⁹ Id.

¹⁰ <http://www.maine.gov/legis/opla/CommissionerMayhewOrientationPresentationJanuary2017.pdf>; page 14