



PRESS RELEASE

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DHS Medicaid Plans Panned as Redistribution of Medical Debt

The Pathway Plan 2012 Exposes Weakness of Wisconsin's DHS Proposed BadgerCare Cuts

Madison- On Monday, November 7, ABC for Health produced an episode of its popular web show, the HealthWatch WatchDog to discuss the details of a new strategy to provide health coverage to people in Wisconsin. "The Pathway Plan for 2012" provides a creative and cost effective public-private partnership as an alternative to Wisconsin's Department of Health Services proposed, destructive cuts to BadgerCare and Medicaid. Bobby Peterson, Public Interest Attorney and Executive Director of ABC for Health, says the Pathway Plan for 2012 could eventually cover all Wisconsin residents while providing high-quality care, continued choice, and strong consumer protections. "While building from a solid foundation, the Pathway Plan for 2012 proposes to expand health care coverage, significantly lower costs, and ensure that all Wisconsinites have access to both coverage and quality medical services."

The web cast on The Pathway Plan for 2012 is available to the media and public at the following link: <http://96.60.62.171/mediasiteabc/Viewer/?peid=e3dfff4038443b5a0684707e578770b>

On September 30th, Secretary Smith and the Walker administration proposed drastic eligibility and coverage limits to the BadgerCare Plus program and the possible termination of over 53,000 adults. The Joint Finance Committee is to gather this Thursday to discuss the proposed cuts. "Mr. Smith proposes to model BadgerCare on a free market system that is badly misaligned with Wisconsin's values," Peterson noted. "Despite strong bi-partisan roots of BadgerCare Plus, the program is now in the hands of highly partisan ideologues. The proposed cuts will force thousands into emergency room care and could lead to the largest redistribution and socialization of uncompensated care and medical debt I have seen in over 20 years of patient advocacy," Peterson continued. The Pathway Plan for 2012 creates a multi-payor Health Care Exchange on the foundation of Wisconsin's popular BadgerCare Plus program. The Plan uses risk pooling and purchasing leverage by reshaping our current system into combined large purchasing pools. In addition, the Pathway Plan for 2012 includes the vital components of outreach, education, and advocacy through the use of Health Benefits Counselors and Health Care Navigators.

Peterson hopes the Joint Finance Committee will see there is an alternative to ripping a hole in the successful BadgerCare pool. Peterson concludes, "The Pathway Plan for 2012 is the route for Wisconsin to follow. Many industries have retooled during this recession including the media, auto makers and others. The small group market with risk puddles and highly segregated risk is no longer viable. The large profit margins for these small groups of the past are gone and cannot be resurrected by destroying the large Badger Care pool. We need to give public and private partnerships and the Pathway Plan a try."



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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