



Wyoming Medicaid Expansion Fact Sheet (2014)

From the Equality State Policy Center. See more at www.equalitystate.org.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA)

In its original design extending health care insurance coverage to all Americans, the ACA required states to expand Medicaid to cover more low-income families and low-income adults without children. In 2012, the Supreme Court struck down the expansion requirement and left it to individual states to implement if they chose. Wyoming's Legislature has thus far chosen to not implement this expansion.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a program that provides free health care to families and children with very low incomes and resources, including low-income elderly and many people with disabilities. It is jointly funded by the Federal government and the states and is managed by individual states.

Why Expand Medicaid?

1. It's the right thing to do. Better health care means more Wyoming residents will get the care they need to get and stay healthy. This benefits all of us and ensures that our families, neighbors, and coworkers will have a much higher quality of life overall.

2. It will help Wyoming's budget. The math doesn't lie — below are numbers through 2020. You don't need to be a fiscal expert to see that this is a good deal for our state.

Mandatory Medicaid expansion funding (automatic):	\$ 99.9 million
Optional Medicaid expansion:	51.2 million
<u>Offsets (shifting some costs to Medicaid expansion):</u>	<u><\$198.5 million></u>
NET SAVINGS:	\$ 47.4 million

3. We will have more good jobs. By 2016, the investment of Medicaid funds will ripple through the economy and support 460 new jobs in all parts of the state in all industries.

4. Our hospitals will be financially healthier. Right now, our hospitals incur approximately \$211 million per year in uncompensated care. Someone has to pay this — often it's us, though higher premiums or increased local taxes or higher charges at our local hospitals and clinics. What happens to our communities if the local healthcare facilities have to close?

5. Medicaid is efficient. Wyoming Medicaid is administered efficiently, and participation by providers in Wyoming is nearly universal. Expanding Medicaid is a cost-efficient way to provide health insurance quickly to 17,600 low-income adults.

6. If we don't use this money from the Federal government, other states will. Not expanding Medicaid in Wyoming is like leaving money for someone else to use, when we need it to take care of our own people.

Medicaid Expansion = A Stronger Wyoming!

Medicaid expansion means health insurance coverage for **all** Wyomingites. The Wyoming Department of Health estimates 17,600 people would enroll in Medicaid if it's expanded to cover this neglected population of low-income adults without dependent children. **It will strengthen** our economy and our workforce and our families. **It will strengthen** our hospitals and our local economies. **It will strengthen** our system of healthcare options in Wyoming.

What You Can Do

- Write letters to the editor of your paper and to the statewide/regional papers. Contact information is at <http://wyopress.org/main.php/external/members>.
- Send emails to and/or call your Legislators. Find their contact information at <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/LSOWEB/LegInfo.aspx>.
- Sign up for ESPC's eAlerts so you can get notifications of important committee hearings and votes. You can click **HERE** to go to our Constant Contact page, or just click on the "Sign Up Today" link on our web site at www.equalitystate.org.