

A Health Care Solution for Wisconsin: BadgerCare Plus

Governor Doyle has introduced a state health care program to cover all of Wisconsin's children with affordable and accessible health care coverage.

The program's introduction is in response to the rising numbers of uninsured children. With rising health care costs and fewer employers covering their employees' health insurance, more families are foregoing insurance for themselves and their children. BadgerCare Plus would cover all of Wisconsin's children regardless of family income as well as prenatal care for all pregnant women making under \$48,000 per year.

If implemented, the BadgerCare Plus program is expected to cover about 500,000 Wisconsin residents in one comprehensive program that would include BadgerCare, Medical Assistance and Healthy Start recipients as well as newly qualified individuals.

BadgerCare Plus is an important health care reform in Wisconsin to watch over the next year. Covering Kids and Families-Wisconsin is a member of the Governor's BadgerCare Plus advisory committee. We will keep you updated on the proposal through our list serve and newsletter.

Register today for the Covering Kids and Families-Wisconsin statewide meeting in Wausau on April 26 at www.ckfwi.org to hear Jason Helgerson, executive assistant to Department of Health and Family Services' Secretary, Helene Nelson, speak about BadgerCare Plus, the current time line and process to make the proposal a reality in Wisconsin.



National News:

- The Massachusetts legislature passed a Universal Health Care Bill on April 4 that Governor Mitt Romney plans to sign into law. The bill combines a variety of proposals, splitting health care costs among businesses, individuals and the government, covering 515,000 uninsured people over the next three years.

- The Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured has updated a primer on America's uninsured population with state-specific data. The update profiles the 45.5 million Americans under age 65 without health insurance. The profile includes data on how they receive and pay for medical care and explains why the number of uninsured individuals has changed recently. View the complete document at: <http://cme.kff.org/Key=10156.17.D.C.G712PV>

Take Action Locally: Request For Proposals

- Covering Kids and Families-Wisconsin received Federal Match money this spring and will be funding several new pilot projects throughout Wisconsin. Proposals for Local Projects are due May 24, 2006. Questions will be addressed at the April 26th CKF-WI statewide meeting. Download a Request For Proposals Application at www.ckfwi.org
- Please contact Michael Jacob at: mbjacob@wisc.edu or 608-261-1455 with any questions.

**Proposals Due:
May 24, 2006!!**

Welcome to **CoverTheUninsuredWeek** May 1-7 2006

Covering Kids and Families-WI is coordinating *Cover the Uninsured Week* efforts throughout the state.

We have a template Op-ed available with data for each county, to localize the article for your area! Contact Johanna Schmitz at johannaschmitz@gmail.com to receive the template, data and media lists. Visit: www.ckfwi.org for updates, events in Wisconsin and information on how you can use this important time to improve access to health care in Wisconsin.

Outreach materials will be available for free at the CKF-WI statewide meeting on April 26th!



Making A Plan

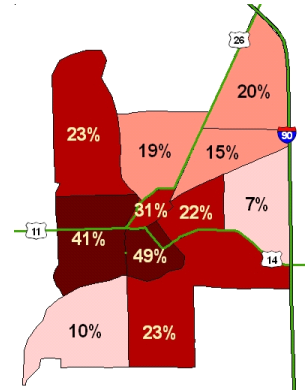
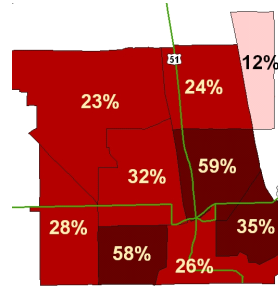
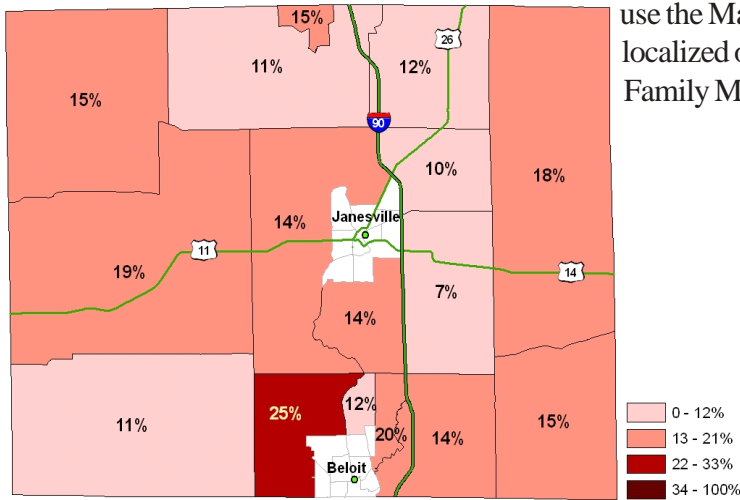
For Public Health Coverage Outreach

Do you know that according to Census estimates, 9.4% of all Wisconsin residents were uninsured in 2000, ranging from 3.8% in Ozaukee County to 25.2% in Menominee County? While it is important to look at overall health coverage for Wisconsin, it is also valuable to recognize how local needs vary.

To address this, Covering Kids and Families – WI is creating “Making a Plan” publications to identify the Medicaid and BadgerCare eligibility levels for each community. These publications contain easy to read maps and statistics on key indicators of Family Medicaid eligibility, such as lack of health insurance and low income areas. These maps will enable you to see how your county fares across census tracts and school districts and in comparison to other areas of the state.

This map for **Rock County** shows the percentage of families with children who have income below 185% of poverty. This is the upper income-eligibility level for Family Medicaid in Wisconsin and indicates how many families may qualify for health care coverage under these programs. Overall, 21% of Rock County’s families are within this income threshold. However, when broken down by census tract, the dramatic variation in potential need becomes apparent.

With maps and statistics relevant to your community, you will be able to use the Making A Plan publications to assist your efforts in developing localized outreach efforts for families and children potentially eligible for Family Medicaid Programs.



Spring Statewide Meeting Highlights By: Kathy Kaelin & Andy Heidt, CKF-WI co-chairs



Covering Kids and Families-Wisconsin’s Spring Statewide Meeting will be in Wausau on April 26. Register today at www.ckfwi.org We will be covering many exciting topics including:

- A diverse panel to discuss the current framework of health care coverage for low-income Wisconsinites. We cannot escape that we are in the midst of a health care crisis; costs are rising, the numbers of uninsured are increasing and government budgets are strained. The panelists will discuss what some of the prospects for reform are that could occur soon and what we need to do to make sure changes happen to improve the health and lives of Wisconsin’s residents.
- BadgerCare Plus is a state health care plan proposed by Governor Doyle to provide access to affordable, comprehensive health care to every child in Wisconsin regardless of family income. **Jason Helgerson** will be presenting an update on details and a time line for the BadgerCare Plus proposal.
- ACCESS.WI.GOV, an interactive on-line program for people in Wisconsin to get answers to questions and health and nutrition programs, including BadgerCare and Medicaid is expanding to allow individuals to apply for health and nutrition programs directly on-line. **Autumn Arnold** will be presenting the information and going through a live demonstration of the new feature available this summer.