

WPHA and WALHDAB Support Medicaid Expansion

The Wisconsin Public Health Association (WPHA) and the Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards (WALHDAB) believe all people deserve the opportunity to live in a state that creates conditions for everyone to be healthy. We also believe public policy should strive toward the elimination of health disparities which is why WPHA and WALHDAB support Governor Tony Evers' proposal to accept federal Medicaid Expansion dollars. Medicaid expansion will provide funding to support prevention initiatives that address social determinants and will provide health care coverage to more than 82,000 residents living between 100 and 138 percent of the federal poverty level. While WPHA and WALHDAB believe it is essential to provide healthcare coverage to the state's most vulnerable populations, we also support investing in a variety of programs, services and policies beyond healthcare that are essential to building a healthier Wisconsin.

According to DHS, the proposal generates \$324.5 million in savings which will be invested back into health initiatives focused on prevention. We can't afford to continue paying the high costs of treatment and care that accrue when we do not attend to prevention, including prevention related social determinants of health. Prevention saves lives and money. The WPHA and WALHDAB legislative priorities specifically focus on prevention opportunities related to justice reform, early childhood education, housing, and income stability and employment. Medicaid expansion provides an important first step in addressing these priorities.

Accepting federal Medicaid Expansion dollars allows the state to invest in a wide variety of prevention programs, related to both healthcare and social determinant of health, including the following:

Healthy Women, Healthy Babies Initiative

- Increase funding for the Women's Health Block Grant by \$1,935,600 to grant funds to entities that provide pregnancy testing; perinatal care coordination and follow-up; cervical cancer screening; sexually transmitted infection prevention, testing, treatment and follow-up; and general health screening.
- Expand postpartum services eligibility for women in the Medicaid program from 60 days to 12 months by providing \$22,9880,000 in fiscal year 2020-21.
- Provide an additional \$1,012,500 in fiscal year 2019-20 and \$2,175,000 in fiscal year 2020-21 to expand home visiting to support expecting mothers and mothers with infants and small children.

Addressing Lead Poisoning

- Reduce the incidence of childhood lead poisoning in our state by providing \$24,996,000 in fiscal year 2019-20 and \$27,158,700 in fiscal year 2020-21 to increase testing, fund lead hazard abatement, and expand Birth to 3 services for lead poisoned children.

Dental Care

- Invest \$43 million to expand dental services for BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid recipients.

Community Health Benefit

- Invest \$45 million for nonmedical services to reduce and prevent health disparities that result from economic and social determinants of health.

Tobacco Cessation

- Provide \$3.3 million a year for tobacco cessation initiatives.

The state has the exciting opportunity to invest in programs that will have a significant impact for Wisconsin citizens by accepting federal Medicaid Expansion dollars. In fact, accepting Medicaid expansion funds is essential in order to be able to invest in these prevention initiatives more broadly. WPHA and WALHDAB urge the Wisconsin State Legislature to accept Governor Evers' proposal and invest in the health and wellbeing of Wisconsin's citizens. If you have any questions, please contact our government affairs representatives Erik Kanter or Tim Hoven at (608) 310-8833.