

Protect Medicaid

Issue: Support policies that protect Medicaid coverage to ensure access to health care for our most vulnerable patients across the country.

Why Action is Needed

Medicaid is the nation's largest health insurer, providing health care coverage for approximately 79 million Americans – 1 in 5 Americans – across the country. This vital program is a lifeline for low-income children, pregnant women, adults, seniors, and people with disabilities. Through this joint state and federal program, Medicaid enrollees receive comprehensive health care coverage such as primary care preventive services, maternal health care and pediatrics, labor and delivery services, behavioral health and substance use treatment, and long-term care services.

Congress is exploring policy changes that could result in patients who rely on Medicaid losing coverage. Potential policy changes impacting patient access to care include imposing work requirements on Medicaid beneficiaries; and, significantly reducing federal spending on Medicaid including per-capita caps, block grants, and eliminating or reducing the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for Medicaid [expansion states](#). ACP is concerned that these proposed policies will have grave consequences for patients, communities and the entire U.S. health care system.

Research has shown that imposing work requirements does not have a meaningful impact on employment and that the savings would mostly come from Medicaid recipients losing coverage as a result of challenges with new paperwork and reporting requirements. Additionally, if the cost of Medicaid is shifted to states, they will be forced to reduce or eliminate certain preventive health care services, lower Medicaid payment rates, and take away health care coverage for low-income children, parents, older adults and people with disabilities and substance use disorders.

Slashing already-low Medicaid payment rates will make it even harder for physicians to provide care to Medicaid enrollees. It could lead to independent health care practices and hospitals closing their doors, decreasing health care access for patients, exacerbating the health care workforce shortage, and increasing health care costs as patients are forced to forgo vital preventive care. We urge members of Congress to reject these proposed changes and to protect Medicaid.

ACP's Position

Medicaid needs to work for patients who rely on the program and the physicians who care for them, especially those living and working in rural and underserved communities. Medicaid reimbursement rates must be adequate to reimburse physicians for the cost of providing services. We also believe that Medicaid minimum eligibility standards should be uniform on a national basis and policymakers should refrain from enacting policy changes that would result in vulnerable persons being dropped from Medicaid coverage.

Call to Action

Protect patients' access to care and oppose legislation that cuts funding or imposes structural changes to Medicaid that would result in significantly less coverage and benefits for Medicaid enrollees.