
Evidence-Based Health Policy Project

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The Affordable Care Act and Medicaid: What Comes Next, and How Might the State Prepare?

Speaker Biographies

Gail Wilensky, PhD

Via videoconference

Economist and Senior Fellow at Project HOPE

Gail Wilensky is an economist and senior fellow at Project HOPE, an international health foundation. She directed the Medicare and Medicaid programs and served in the White House as a senior adviser on health and welfare issues to President George H.W. Bush. She was also the first chair of the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission.

Dr. Wilensky currently serves as a trustee of the Combined Benefits fund of the United Mine Workers of America and the National Opinion Research Center, is on the Board of Regents of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and the Board of Directors of the Geisinger Health System Foundation, United Health Group, Quest Diagnostics and Brainscope. She is an elected member of the Institute of Medicine, served two terms on its governing council and chaired the Healthcare Services Board. She is a former chair of the board of Directors for Academy Health, a former trustee of the American Heart Association, and a current or former director of numerous other non-profit organizations. She received a bachelor's degree in psychology and a PhD in economics at the University of Michigan, and has received several honorary degrees.

Michael Heifetz, MPA

State of Wisconsin Medicaid Director

Presentation: Entitlement Reform

Michael Heifetz was appointed as State Medicaid Director in October, 2016, leading multiple programs that serve 1.2 million members with an annual budget of \$8 billion. Mr. Heifetz has 24 years of private and public sector experience, including eleven years in the health care arena. Immediately before his current position, Michael served as the State Budget Director for three years, running the budgeting, financial services and policy analysis functions for the Executive Branch. This included working directly with the Governor to develop the \$72 billion state biennial budget, and ensuring implementation. Prior to these senior positions in state service, Michael served as the Vice President for Government Affairs for Dean Clinic and SSM Health Care of Wisconsin (now SSM Health), the parent company of three wholly-owned hospitals plus five affiliated hospitals, numerous clinics, an award-winning health plan and a PBM. In that role, Michael worked closely with federal and state elected and appointed officials to address many health care issues, including access, cost and quality improvement. He was also a key strategist for Dean and SSM in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, and a national speaker on that same topic.

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Justin Sydnor, PhD

Economist and Professor, UW School of Business

Presentation: High Deductible Plans and Health Savings Accounts

Justin Sydnor is an associate professor at the Wisconsin School of Business at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he is the Leslie P. Schultz Professor in Risk Management and Insurance. Dr. Sydnor earned his Bachelor's degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his PhD in Economics from the University of California, Berkeley. He is the Associate Director of the University of Wisconsin Center for Financial Security and a board member of the UW BRITE Lab. Dr. Sydnor is also a research associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research in the Health Care Program. His research interests include behavioral economics and studies of decision-making in insurance markets.

Donna Friedsam, MPH

Health Policy Program Director, UW Population Health Institute

**Presentation: Repeal* and Replace* (*Insert Here: Wait a While):
What Might Calm Insurance Markets and Assure Consumers**

Donna Friedsam serves as the Director of the Health Policy Program within the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, including overseeing the Evidence-Based Health Policy Project. She leads a team of faculty and researchers evaluating Wisconsin's BadgerCare Plus program, and she administers Covering Wisconsin program within the UW School of Human Ecology. She has worked extensively on access to and financing of health care and the organization of delivery systems, and consults widely in the public and private sectors on state government programs and on reform initiatives.

Ms. Friedsam served previously as Executive Director of the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association, director of a managed care demonstration project, and manager of several projects supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the federal Health Resources and Services Administration, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Ms. Friedsam holds a master's degree in public health policy and administration from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.