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Translating Research into Policy and Practice

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The UW Population Health Institute's E-News is delivered monthly. Check our web site for additional information and updates: <http://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/publications/eNews.htm>. To subscribe or unsubscribe, reply to [Colleen Comeau](#) with the word "subscribe" or "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

Information for E-news is compiled from several sources, including websites and lists from the *Wheeler Report*, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Kaiser Family Foundation, Commonwealth Fund, *Milbank Quarterly*, *Health Affairs*, Urban Institute, *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, Wispolitics.com, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, *The New York Times*, *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, *Milwaukee Business Journal*, *Wisconsin State Journal*, Wisconsin Technology Network and others.

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STATE NEWS

[Governor Doyle Creates New eHealth Board](#)

Governor Jim Doyle signed Executive Order 303, creating the Wisconsin Relay of Electronic Data (WIRED) for Health Board to develop a structure for a statewide electronic medical records exchange by June 1, 2010. The WIRED for Health Board replaces the eHealth Care Quality and Safety Board and will develop a plan for a statewide health information exchange. The Board will consist of 14 members. Descriptions of board seats and committee positions, as well as nomination application requirements and forms are available at: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/eHealth>

[New Basic Plan Proposed for BadgerCare Plus Core Plan Wait List](#)

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services has proposed a new state benefit for the people who are on the Core Plan waiting list. This follows the October closing of enrollment for the new Core Plan for adults without dependent children. The Core Plan was limited to enrolling 52,000 people but faced over 80,000 applicants. The proposed BadgerCare Plus Basic would

provide very limited benefits and is intended to act as a bridge until there is an opening for Core plan enrollment or to coverage that becomes available through federal reform. DHS is currently considering three benefit design scenarios, which will have an approximately \$100 monthly premium. The program must be fully-self funded through premiums.

Wisconsin Health Care Workforce Shortage Persist

The Wisconsin Hospital Association has released its Health Care Workforce 2009 Report. It reports that current economic conditions have not changed projections that indicate Wisconsin will face formidable challenges maintaining a workforce that can meet the growing demand for care. Key occupations that remain hard to fill. Include pharmacists, laboratory technologists, and physical and occupational therapists.

Wisconsin Ranks #12 in America's Health Rankings

Wisconsinites are smoking less, but have added weight from 20 years ago, according to a new report. "America's Health Rankings" puts Wisconsin at 12th in the nation, up from 17th in 2008, in terms of the health of its residents, said the report, which is released annually by United Health Foundation, the American Public Health Association and Partnership for Prevention. The state ranked last - 50th – among states for binge drinking and per capita public health funding. Wisconsin's obesity level has increased by 24% in the last five years.

Drunk Driving Bill Passed by Senate Makes 4th Offense a Felony

The Wisconsin Senate unanimously passed a historic drunk driving bill that would require more drivers to install ignition interlock devices on their vehicles and would make some fourth drunk driving offenses a felony. The Assembly unanimously passed [a similar bill](#) in September. The Senate and Assembly are currently working to negotiate the differences between the two bills.

Tobacco Research Center Gets \$9 Million

The Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention, affiliated with the University of Wisconsin-Madison, announced a \$9 million federal grant to explore the best ways to quit smoking. The funding is the third long-term federal grant to the UW Center to study smoking treatments. The first was in 1999 followed by another in 2004, said Dean Robert Golden of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

Milwaukee Area HealthCare Costs Remain Higher than Midwest Average

Higher payments to physicians are keeping health care costs in southeastern Wisconsin above the Midwest average, but the gap is narrowing substantially, according to a study commissioned by the Greater Milwaukee Business Foundation on Health Inc. The study found that health care insurance premium costs in the area were 9% higher than the Midwest average in 2007. In two previous studies commissioned by the organization, the area's costs were 39% above the Midwest average in 2003 and 55% higher in 2000.

Researchers Find Rare but Dangerous Rural Fungal Disease in Milwaukee

Blastomycosis, a potentially fatal fungal infection, has typically been associated with rural northern Wisconsin. However, according to new research published in the Wisconsin Medical Journal (Vol. 108, No. 8), it is also a disease that affects city dwellers.

State Expands H1N1 Vaccine Group

The Department of Health Services announced that it is expanding the H1N1 vaccination group to include healthy school age children and young adults. Based upon the H1N1 vaccine supply and feedback from providers, Wisconsin is returning to the original CDC target group recommendations. The State has also launched a **campaign** to encourage people to get the H1N1 vaccine. The campaign also promotes flu.wisconsin.gov, which contains information about vaccine safety, frequently asked questions about H1N1, and a link to the 2-1-1 vaccine clinic locator.

Elder Abuse Continues to Climb in State

The state report by the Department of Health Services said elder abuse statewide increased 5.1 percent to 5,144 in 2008.

New Wisconsin Medical Center Will Have Coordinated Care & Integrated eRecords

Aurora Health Care's new 110-bed Aurora Medical Center in the town of Summit, WI, will include coordinated care featuring an integrated electronic health record. Opening on March 1, the medical center will offer primary care services, such as family medicine, internal medicine, OB/GYN, pediatrics, and women's health, under one roof located off Wisconsin's Interstate 94 and Highway 67.

Report: Cancer Kills Almost 11,000 per Year in Wisconsin

This WI Department of Health Services reports presents summary information about Wisconsin cancer incidence (new cancer cases) and mortality (deaths due to cancer) that occurred from 2002 through 2006. The reports also shows that over that five-year period an average of about 27,300 cancers were diagnosed among Wisconsin residents annually, killing about 10,800 a year.

Wisconsin Medical Society Begins Performance Improvement Initiative

The Wisconsin Health Information Organization (WHIO) has launched a campaign to encourage health care purchasers, payers and agents to use its Health Analytics Exchange, a centralized data mart of health care claims information. The Wisconsin Medical Society, a founding member of WHIO, also announced an initiative to transform the data into a vital performance improvement resource for physicians that will lead to better patient care in Wisconsin.

State Changes Stance on Disability Work Center Limits

The Department of Health Services and representatives from organizations involved with Medicaid waiver-funded prevocational services have reached an agreement regarding the revised prevocational services definition in Wisconsin's Family Care renewal application. Prevocational services develop and teach individuals with disabilities general skills which help prepare a person for paid employment in an integrated community setting.

Free Services for Uninsured Individuals Seeking Health Care for Flu-like Illness

The Department of Health Services announced health care is available for uninsured Wisconsin residents who are experiencing influenza-like symptoms. Uninsured individuals can receive an outpatient visit for evaluation and treatment at no cost with the use of an established provider network.

[Report Found a Significant Decrease in Tobacco Sale to Wisconsin Minors](#)

The state's 2009 Synar sales compliance survey, which determines the number of retail outlets that are selling tobacco illegally to minors, shows a noncompliance rate of 5.7 percent—20 percent lower than the 2008 rate of 7.2 percent. The annual Synar survey randomly selects retail outlets from across the state to determine a reliable estimate of the rate of illegal tobacco sales to minors. Named after the Congressman who sponsored the federal legislation, the Synar legislation requires all states to monitor and reduce the rate of illegal tobacco sales to minors at retail establishments.

RESEARCH AND PROGRAM TOOLS

New and Updated Resources from the Commonwealth Fund

- **[Report: Comprehensive Congressional Health Reform Bills Overview](#)**
- **[Issue Brief: How Can Medicare Lead Delivery System Reform](#)**
- **[Preview: Analysis of the Health System Reform Bills](#)**
- **[International Survey: U.S. Lags in Access, Quality, Use of Health IT](#)**
- **[Study: Outcome for Minority Patients Linked to Source of Care](#)**

New and Updated Resources from the Kaiser Family Foundation

- **[Chartbook: State Variation and Health Reform](#)**
- **[Side by Side Comparison Tool Now Reflects Senate Leaderships Bill](#)**
- **[Health Reform Subsidy Calculator Now Reflects Senate Leadership Bill](#)**
- **[Issue Brief: Assesses CBO Estimates of House and Senate HealthCare Bills](#)**
- **[Issue Brief: Health Reform and Communities of Color](#)**
- **[Issue Brief: Access to Abortion Coverage and Health Reform](#)**
- **[Issue Brief: Medicaid and CHIP provisions in House Leadership Bill](#)**
- **[Issue Brief: Summary of Coverage Provisions in House Leadership Bill](#)**
- **[Issue Brief: Summary of Coverage Provisions in Senate Leadership Bill](#)**
- **[Updated Kaiser Health Tracking Poll on Public Opinion of Health Reform](#)**
- **[Fact Sheet: Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic](#)**
- **[Issue Brief: State Medicaid Coverage of Perinatal Services](#)**
- **[Issue Brief: State Medicaid Coverage of Family Planning Services](#)**
- **[Medicare Part D 2010 Data Spotlights](#)**
- **[Medical Home and Community-Based Service Programs Updates](#)**

Resources from UW Population Health Institute's Health Policy Unit

A continually updated page of links to data, program, and policy resources.

EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Monday Population Health Seminar Series

Every Monday, 12:00 - 1:00 PM, Room 1309 HSLC

Webinar Series: Climate Change – Mastering the Public Health Role

Second Webinar in Series: December 8, 1:00 – 2:00 PM, Registration Required-Free

Global Health Seminar Series

"Working with Communities to Improve Health and Well-Being in Rural Guadalajara: Faculty and Student Leader Perspectives on a University Partnership"

December 9, 5:00 – 6:00 PM, Room 1325 HSLC

National Health Care Reform: Acting Nationally, Impacting Locally

December 14, 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Union Theater Memorial Union, Registration Required-Free

READING ROOM

Federal Panel Finds Regional Differences in Use of Medical Care

The federal Medicare Payment Advisory Commission released [a new report](#) showing that regional differences in the use of health care services were substantial but smaller than previously reported by the Dartmouth Atlas researchers. Representatives from lower-cost states like Wisconsin often argue that their doctors and hospitals provide efficient and high-quality care but are shortchanged by Medicare. Use of services in La Crosse, Wis was 77 percent of the national average. The Medicare commission said: "Regional variation in service use is not equivalent to regional variation in Medicare spending. The two should not be confused."

U.S. Advisory Committee on Minority Health Issues Report on Health Reform

The [Advisory Committee on Minority Health](#) submitted their report to Secretary Kathleen Sebelius with suggestions ensuring that health care reform meets health care needs of minority communities and eliminates health disparities.

Routine Mammography No Longer Recommended in Women Aged 40 to 49 Years

The US Preventative Services Task Force recommends against routine screening mammography in women aged 40 to 49 years. The decision to start regular, biennial screening mammography before the age of 50 years should be an individual one and take patient context into account, including the patient's values regarding specific benefits and harms [Additional [article](#) accompanying recommendation].

Study: Enrolling More Children in Medicaid/CHIP

A new study from the Urban Institute analyzes states' progress enrolling children in Medicaid/CHIP services. The article describes who remains to be enrolled and what the prospects are for doing so. The analysis suggests steps to improve the enrollment and retention processes and tailoring outreach strategies.

Report: Efforts Needed to Ensure Medicaid Recipients Receive Preventive Care

New GAO report examines available data to assess (1) the extent to which Medicaid children and adults have certain health conditions and receive certain preventive services, (2) for Medicaid children, state monitoring and promotion of the provision of preventive services, (3) for Medicaid adults, state coverage of preventive services, and (4) federal oversight by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

[TheLancet.com Released Series of Paper about Health and Climate Change](#)

The Comments and Articles make a strong case for linking climate and health goals, and provide a quantitative underpinning for this important health message. This Series is the result of an international collaboration of scientists supported by a consortium of funding bodies coordinated by the Wellcome Trust, UK.

[Study: Intervention Enables Nurses to Improve Medication Accuracy](#)

A significant proportion of medication errors occur at the administration stage, and therefore are unlikely to be prevented by solutions such as computerized provider order entry, which primarily target the prescribing stage. To address this problem, seven hospitals participated in a quality improvement collaborative to engage frontline nurses in addressing medication administration errors. The project resulted in a significant reduction in administration errors across all six hospitals included in the analysis.

[Study: Family Financial Status Affects Child-Care Injury Rates](#)

Although children from poorer families who have child care may suffer from a higher rate of accidental injuries, child care could actually protect kids from affluent families, new research suggests.

[Policy Review: Pandemic Influenza as 21st Century Urban Public Health Crisis](#)

The percentage of the world's population living in urban areas will increase from 50% in 2008 to 70% (4.9 billion) in 2025. Crowded urban areas in developing and industrialized countries are uniquely vulnerable to public health crises and face daunting challenges in surveillance, response, and public communication. Innovative approaches are needed because traditional local-level strategies may not be easily scalable upward to meet the needs of huge, densely populated cities, especially in developing countries.

[Study: One in Four Teen Girls in the U.S. Have STDs](#) (subscription required)

As many as one in four U.S. teenage girls have had a sexually transmitted disease (STD), many infected soon after their first sexual encounter, a new government report shows.

[Study: Vigorous Exercise Cuts Stroke Risk for Men, Not Women](#) (subscription required)

Moderate-to-high intensity exercise such as jogging, swimming or tennis may help reduce stroke risk in older men but not in women, researchers report.

[Data Brief: U.S. Lags Behind Europe in International Rankings of Infant Mortality](#)

New data released from the National Center for Health Statistics released a report as well as key findings. Among them, the main cause of the United States' high infant mortality rate when compared with Europe is the very high percentage of preterm births in the United States.

[Data Brief: Recent Trends in Late Preterm Births in the U.S.](#)

New data released from the National Center for Health Statistics released a report as well as key findings. The U.S. late preterm birth rate rose 20% from 1990 to 2006. If the late preterm rate had not risen from the 1990 level, more than 50,000 fewer infants would have been delivered late preterm in 2006.