



**Catch-Up Briefing**  
**May-June 2014**  
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Information for *Catch-Up Briefing* is compiled from several sources, including the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Commonwealth Fund, Health Affairs, Kaiser Family Foundation, Milbank Quarterly, Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, Milwaukee Business Journal, The New York Times, Urban Institute, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, Wisconsin Health News, Wisconsin Medical Journal, Wispolitics.com, Wheeler Report, Wisconsin State Journal, Wisconsin Technology Network, and others.

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## STATE NEWS

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### Health Care Reform Implementation in WI

#### [140,000 WI Residents Enroll in ACA Marketplace Plans](#)

As of the end of the first open enrollment period for the Health Insurance Marketplaces, Wisconsin had nearly 140,000 individuals select a Marketplace plan and over 81,000 who went to the federal Marketplace were found eligible for Medicaid, according to the April ASPE report. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) also released a [Medicaid enrollment report](#) as well as [state profiles](#). The White House released a [fact sheet](#) of ACA-related numbers. The Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OCI) released an updated [fact sheet](#) on enrollment in Wisconsin in mid-March.

The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) article provides context about the continued enrollment work in Wisconsin, and the surge in applications and assistance in Milwaukee at the end of open enrollment. [Common Ground](#) Health Care Cooperative in Milwaukee exceeded its enrollment goal of 10,000 in January, making it one of the successful cooperatives set up under the ACA.

#### [Report Issued on Wisconsin Health Insurance Market and Wisconsin Entitlement Reforms](#)

Wisconsin OCI and Department of Health Services (DHS) released an over-1500 page report providing a review of the Wisconsin insurance market prior to the ACA, the roles of OCI and DHS, the biennial budget decisions and impact on BadgerCare and ACA implementation, the work done by both agencies during open enrollment, a look ahead, and copies of outreach and education materials from various sources.

#### [14 Percent of Wisconsin's Insured Had Premiums that Exceeded ACA Affordability](#)

The Commonwealth Fund assessed the 32 million individuals under age 65 who were underinsured in the U.S. in 2012, providing a comparison with the number of those individuals who would be helped by the ACA. Over a half-million Wisconsinites with insurance had premiums higher than Medicaid or Marketplace affordability guidelines under the ACA.

#### [Rural Residents Face Higher ACA Premiums, and WI Among Highest](#)

The Kaiser Family Foundation rated Wisconsin's rural areas among the insurance price zones on the most-expensive list, along with rural areas in Colorado, Georgia, Nevada, and Wyoming. The ranking is based on rates for the lowest-priced "silver" plan under the Affordable Care Act.

#### [Census Bureau Changes and Health Care Reform Monitoring](#)

The U.S. Census Bureau redesign of the Current Population Survey (CPS) has caused significant discussion and concern in the political dialog around tracking the success of the ACA, as reported on in the [New York Times](#). However, the [State Health Access Data Assistance Center](#) clarifies that the CPS redesign was started before the ACA, and will provide survey results from both 2013 and 2014, providing pre and post-ACA health insurance coverage data with the new survey design. Additionally, the American Community survey, which the [Wisconsin Council on Children and Families](#) points out is a more reliable measure of state level data, is not changing.

#### **Polls on ACA and Uninsured:** [Gallup](#); [Health Reform Monitoring Survey](#); [Marquette Law School Poll](#);

A recent [paper](#) assesses the value of the Gallup-Healthways' Well-Being Index as a data source, and finds that uninsured rate estimates from the survey are comparable to other sources and are more

rapidly available. In the first quarter of 2014, Gallup showed a 15.6 percent uninsured rate, which is the lowest level since late 2008.

The [Urban Institute's Health Reform Monitoring Survey](#) found in data from March 2014 that the number of uninsured adults has fallen by 5.4 million since 2013. The uninsured rate ranges from 12.4 percent in states not expanding Medicaid to 18.1 percent in states expanding Medicaid.

The Marquette Law School [Poll](#) in late March assessed voters in Wisconsin's views of health care reform. Half those surveyed have an unfavorable view of health care reform, but just over half say that they support keeping and improving the law.

## **Medicaid/BadgerCare**

### ["Michigan and Wisconsin Highlight the Divide on Medicaid Expansion"](#)

*The Washington Post* reports how the neighboring states that took very different approaches to the law's Affordable Care Act's expansion of coverage for low-income individuals. In Wisconsin, Republican Gov. Walker pared back Medicaid eligibility while opening up the program to more lowest-income adults. In Michigan, Republican Gov. Snyder is using a federal waiver to implement the ACA's expansion.

### [Family Care Expands to 7 Counties in Northeast Wisconsin](#)

Family Care in has now been expanded to seven counties in northeast Wisconsin. Previously, 57 counties offered Family Care services. This expansion allows the additional counties to have access to the long-term care, allowing people to stay in their own homes longer.

### [CMS Shared Responsibility Provision: Clarification about BadgerCare](#)

The Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services published guidance to explain a new exemption from the Shared Responsibility Payment, (a.k.a. tax penalty), that an individual may be subjected to when they file their 2014 taxes in 2015. BadgerCare Plus members whose BadgerCare Plus coverage did not start until April 1, 2014 are covered by the new coverage gap exemption and will not be subject to the penalty as long as they applied for benefits prior to March 31, 2014. The Shared Responsibility Payment also has other previously published exemptions including one for people with incomes below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level.

### [\\*New\\* Medicaid Eligibility Handbook](#)

DHS released Wisconsin's New Medicaid Eligibility Handbook, effective May 1, 2014. A [supplemental document](#) highlights additions and changes to the handbook.

### [Commonwealth Fund Focuses on Milwaukee Medicaid Managed Care](#)

The Commonwealth Fund published a report that examines health care providers' perspectives on the role managed care in improving health services for low income communities. Findings are based on interviews with providers, care coordinators, and health plans serving Medicaid populations in four communities. Milwaukee, Wis. is one of the four communities profiled in the report. The report points to activities to improve service as well as the challenges associated with managed care.

### [WI Medicaid Enrollment Shows 1.3% Decline Since ACA Launch](#)

CMS published a monthly report on state Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) data and compares enrollment at the end of February with the state's monthly average from July to September. Wisconsin enrollment in Medicaid and CHIP has dipped 1.3 percent since open enrollment

for the federal health reform law began in October. Meanwhile, Wisconsin received 31,085 new applications in February. This is 71.8 percent increase from its pre-health reform law average of 18,084. This may be due to childless adults being allowed to apply for coverage.

[Avalere Health reports](#) that 17 of the 26 states that did not expand Medicaid still experienced growth in Medicaid enrollment, which the report attributes to the “woodwork effect.” Wisconsin, however, was not one of the states that experienced such growth.

#### [DHS Delays Changes to Well Women Program](#)

Wisconsin Well Women Program (WWWP) provides preventive health screening services, such as mammograms and pap tests, to women with little or no health care coverage. Many women in the program will now have access to preventative screenings through BadgerCare+ and the federal health insurance Marketplace comprehensive coverage. DHS has responded with proposed updates to restructure the WWWP, yet the termination of contract proposal has been pushed back. The program will continue to educate women on expanded choices available to them through public and private health care coverage in addition to providing services to women who are eligible.

#### [Medicaid Report Delivered to the Joint Finance Committee](#)

Wisconsin Secretary of Health Services provided an update for the third quarter of FY 2014 consistent with Section 46.03(26) and JLAC criteria. The report includes changes to the Medicaid program and overall conditions of the Medicaid benefit since last the last quarter. In respect to BadgerCare Plus Reform and Medicaid, DHS plans to implement recent BC+ changes and the Governor’s proposed budget. DHS also reports on the many projects currently being developed.

### **Workforce/Health Professionals/Training & Education**

#### [WI to Participate in Healthcare Workforce Policy Academy](#)

Wisconsin has been selected along with six other states by the National Governors’ Association to develop and implement statewide plans for their health care workforce. *The Building a Transformed Health Care Workforce: Moving from Planning to Implementation* policy academy will help states develop a plan to serve as a roadmap for implementing health workforce policies that support broad statewide goals.

#### [New Grants to Bring Physicians to Underserved Areas of WI](#)

The WI Higher Education Aids Board will begin administering the Primary Care and Psychiatry Shortage Grant (Act 128), which was created to encourage these physicians to practice in underserved areas of the state. Physicians must fill out an application and submit a notice of intent about their practice plans prior to accepting employment. WI already has [loan repayment for providers](#) who practice in underserved areas.

#### **WI Two Medical Schools Report their Medical Students' Matches to Residency Programs**

The [Medical College of Wisconsin](#) and the [UW School of Medicine and Public Health](#) have reported the rate of matching of their students to residency programs, their specialty selections, rate of retention in Wisconsin, primary care interests, rural and urban intentions.

#### [Residency Program to Focus on Quality](#)

The Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative and the Wisconsin Hospital Association developed the Quality Residency Program for novice hospital quality professionals to engage in education, leadership training

and networking. The two-year program provides in-person learning modules to reflect an enriched learning environment. Additional information about the program, application and scholarships can be access [here](#).

#### [Marshfield Clinic Aligns Medical and Dental Care](#)

The Institute for Oral and Systemic Health, a new program at Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation, aims to better integrate medical and dental care by utilizing informatics, preventative science, and patient and provider education. Marshfield Clinic is one of the few health systems in the U.S. where patients receive services in both medicine and dental care.

#### [WEAVR Volunteer Program Assists with Disasters](#)

Health care professionals, active or retired, can register on the Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry (WEAVR) to volunteer in times of natural disaster or public health emergency. Past volunteer experiences include staffing Red Cross shelters during floods, screening evacuees from Hurricane Katrina, and working call centers during H1N1 pandemic. Interested individuals can self-register online at the [WEAVR website](#).

#### [MCW Receives Federal Grants to Study Neurodegenerative Disease; Cancer Therapy](#)

National Institute of Health awarded a three-year, \$740,000 grant to the Medical College of Wisconsin to fund research in neurodegenerative diseases. The goal of the research is to determine how the accumulation of aberrantly-folded proteins handles the breakdown of toxic proteins as seen in Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's Disease, Huntington's Disease, and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. MCW has also been awarded a [\\$1.6 million five year federal grant](#) to support development of novel immune cell-based therapies for cancer.

#### [Rural Health Benefits Counseling Awarded Federal Grant](#)

ABC for Rural Health and community partners in Polk County were awarded a three year grant of over \$850,000 to implement increased health benefit counseling in coordination with technology to improve coverage and services.

#### [Changing Demographics and Wisconsin's Economic Future](#)

The Wisconsin Taxpayer Alliance released a new report quantifying the effects of baby-boomer retirement in Wisconsin. There will be a significant effect on the Wisconsin economy from this trend, with a general decline of the working-age population. This trend will have an impact on health services, as aging retirees may return to Wisconsin for better access to health care, and generally demand more health care services.

#### [Nursing's Voice: Aim to improve mental health](#)

Four nursing schools in Milwaukee are partnering with the Nursing's Voice initiative to ensure that nurses are an active part of the mental health conversations and transformations in Milwaukee.

### **Public Health**

#### [EPA Puts Stricter Regulations on Vehicle Emissions](#)

The Environmental Protection Agency issued new emissions standards for automobiles and gasoline. Despite strong opposition from the petroleum industry, the final fuel standards will lower gasoline sulfur levels by more than 60% and smog-forming pollutants such as nitrous oxide by 80%. These new standards are expected to improve health outcomes, air quality, and the economy. Because motor

vehicles are a major source of air pollution, [Wisconsin](#) requires certain vehicles to pass emissions tests before driving on the roads.

#### [UW researchers find soda tax has little impact on decreasing obesity](#)

Health professionals and advocates have attributed increases in soft drink consumption to the increase in obesity rates. As a preventive measure, many states have attempted to influence consumer behavior by taxing soft drinks. However, a recent study found that although increase in soft drink taxation correlates with decrease soda consumption, reduction in total caloric intake among adults was not significant. In substitution of soda, people consume other high calorie foods. Although taxing soft drinks had minimal impact on population weight, reduction in soda consumption may lead to other public health improvements including oral health and diabetes management.

#### [2014 Wisconsin County Health Rankings Released](#)

The annual County Health Rankings released late March designated Ozaukee, Kewaunee, Portage, Taylor and Door as the five healthiest counties in Wisconsin. Among the counties with the poorest health rankings are Menominee, Milwaukee, Adams, Marquette and Forest. The report examined factors that influence health, including smoking, high school graduation rates, employment, physical inactivity and access to healthy foods.

#### [National report Names Wisconsin Worst in Nation for African American Children](#)

A national policy report, *Race for Results: Building a Path to Opportunity for All Children*, compared the progression of African American, American Indian, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino and White children during prime milestones in life. Wisconsin was ranked as the worst state for black children, whereas, it was ranked 10<sup>th</sup> for white children. The [Wisconsin Council of Children and Families](#) discusses the report and its relationship to WCCF's recent Race to Equity project.

#### [Governor Walker signs H.O.P.E. bills into law](#)

The [Journal Sentinel](#) reports on Wisconsin's escalating substance abuse and heroin problem. According to the Wisconsin Department of Justice, from 2010 to 2012 the number of heroin-related offenses increased from 79 percent to 671 percent. The Heroin Opiate Prevention and Education (H.O.P.E.) bill, a package of seven bills, aims to mitigate this epidemic by implementing various prevention and treatment options. New legislation includes immunity for users if they report overdose cases, medical responders can carry drugs to counteract overdoses, identity required for picking up multiple prescriptions and community drug disposal programs.

#### [Governor Walker signs Silver Alert bill into law](#)

The Silver Alert system notifies the public through the media and other sources in cases when an elderly individual is missing. Because of the effects of dementia and Alzheimer's Disease among the elderly population, swift action is crucial for their survival. The Alzheimer's Association of Wisconsin projects that 110,000 adults with dementia and about 60 percent of elderly affected with dementia will go missing or wander.

#### [Hepatitis Awareness Month](#)

May is hepatitis awareness month and May 19<sup>th</sup> is National Hepatitis Testing Day. About 4.4 million Americans are living with chronic hepatitis, most are not aware they have the viral infection. The most common types are Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. Hepatitis, inflammation of the liver, is the

leading cause of liver cancer and most common reason for liver transplantation. Wisconsin DHS provides fact sheets ([Hep A](#), [Hep B](#), [Hep C](#)) and [resource centers](#) for hepatitis.

#### [MCW researchers find positive health impacts of electronic health records](#)

A recent study by Medical College of Wisconsin researchers, published in *Health Affairs*, found that access to electronic health records (EHR) significantly impacts head CT scan interpretations and the care patients receive. Specifically, the study found that neuroradiologists were more likely to reach consensus of a clinical diagnosis when clinical data derived from an EHR. As a result, the study demonstrates the value of implementing EHRs in providing effective patient care.

#### [Dane County African Americans have high cancer rates](#)

The Cancer Health Disparities Initiatives at the UW Carbone Cancer Center released a study on cancer-related data of African Americans residing in Dane County. One of several health disparity facts reveal that African Americans are at one-third greater risk for being diagnosed with cancer than their white counterparts. Results of the study will be used to support cancer prevention, screening and research projects.

#### [Teen birth rates in Wisconsin declined 20% in past decade, but trends vary by race](#)

A study in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal* reports that, from 2001 to 2010, teen birth rates among blacks and whites declined, while rates among American Indians and Hispanics increased. Using data from the Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health, the authors also found that pregnancy rates among those 15 to 19 years old varied even more by county.

### **Clinics, Hospitals, and Health Plans**

#### [Area Wisconsin Hospitals Get Medicare Bonuses or Penalties](#)

UW Hospital received relatively lower and inconsistent scores on a mixture of quality measures, death rates, and patient surveys, such that it will receive lower Medicare payments than last year. Other area hospitals, such as Sauk Prairie and St. Mary's in Madison and Baraboo, will receive bonuses. Penalties and bonuses are one piece of the healthcare reform's Medicare incentive program to encourage hospitals and doctors to provide better care.

#### [UW Hospital and Clinics posts 5.8% operating margin year-to-date](#)

The operating 5.8% margin year-to-date reported as of March 2014 exceeds the budget expectation of 4.9%, although it is down from last year's 9.4% margin. This still leaves the performance exceeding the S&P + rating.

#### [WI Ranks 7 among States in Health System Performance](#)

The Commonwealth Fund provides updated data for 2014, ranking states on access, prevention & treatment, hospital use and costs, healthy lives, and equity.

#### [Report: WI long-term care private rates higher than national average](#)

A 2014 survey of nursing home costs and private pay rates reports that Wisconsin's prices are about 10% higher than the national average. Part of this may be due to the cost shifting associated with lower payments from Medicaid, as suggested by [a separate report](#) that WI nursing homes lose more money per day from Medicaid than all but two states.

#### [Wisconsin Healthcare Systems Announces Partnership](#)

Wild Rose Community Memorial Hospital announced its plans to affiliate with ThedaCare. As a result of the partnership, ThedaCare will install its electronic medical records system at Wild Rose Community Memorial Hospital in an effort to streamline information between the two healthcare systems and other health care providers in the area. The systems predict that the partnership will deliver quality care more cost effectively, reduce duplication, and improve the patient experience.

#### [Sauk Prairie Opens New Hospital](#)

Sauk Prairie opened a new 36-bed hospital early April. The \$68 million facility features nearly two-thirds more space than the existing hospital, with larger patient rooms, larger operating rooms, a special room for Cesarean-section births and more private areas for care before and after surgeries, among other amenities. The existing hospital will serve as an outpatient rehab facility, with a wellness area, and some additional business departments.

#### [Hospital Price Transparency Report: Most States Fall Short](#)

Wisconsin is one of the forty-five states to receive a failing grade from the Catalyst for Payment Reform and the Health Care Incentives Improvement Institute on a report card on state price transparency laws. The report examined state-specific laws and regulations focused on transparency along with state-mandated price transparency websites. The report card scored on how readily consumers could find meaningful information on price and awarded an overall letter grade to each state based on states laws, regulations, and state-mandated website. The document was issued to spur a conversation about best practices and generate improvements in public policies and consumer websites.

#### [UW Hospital and Aurora St. Lukes among 100 Great Hospitals in America](#)

Becker's Hospital Review 2014 listed UW Hospital and Clinic as one of the 100 great hospitals in America. UW is one of two hospitals in Wisconsin to be listed; the other is Aurora St. Lukes Medical Center in Milwaukee. The review was created by researching medical and capital investments, industry rankings, awards and accreditations from more than 600 hospitals.

#### [UW Health and Swedish American Health System to Merge](#)

Formally affiliated health systems since 2010, UW Health and Swedish American in Rockford, IL, announced their intention to merge after regulatory approval. This would be the first formal merger for UW Health.

#### [Children's Hospital of Wisconsin to Open Delafield Clinic](#)

Children's Hospital of Milwaukee plans to open a 30,000 sq. ft. clinic in Delafield this year. The \$6 million facility will have two primary care physicians and a part-time pediatric specialist available based on patient volume and need. The clinic is an investment to increase access to pediatric specialty care in Milwaukee suburbs.

#### [Froedtert to Provide Wellness Services for Milwaukee County Workers](#)

Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin Workforce Health has been awarded a three year contract to provide wellness services for Milwaukee county employees. Under the agreement, Workforce Health will provide annual health risks assessments, health coaching and tobacco cessation programs at multiple sites.

### [WPS Hires Former Wisconsin Medicaid Director Brett Davis](#)

WPS Health Insurance, Wisconsin's not-for profit health insurer, has hired Brett Davis as the new Vice President of Public Relations. Davis served as Medicaid Director for the state of Wisconsin, where he oversaw a budget of \$8 billion serving 1.1 million Wisconsin residents.

### Passed Legislation

- [WI Act 135](#): Tests administered to newborns for congenital disorders
- [WI Act 137](#): Grants for workplace wellness programs, granting rule-making authority, and making an appropriation
- [WI Act 161](#): Admission of minors for inpatient treatment
- [WI Act 186](#): Copayments, deductibles, or coinsurance for oral chemotherapy and injected or intravenous chemotherapy
- [WI Act 187](#): Amends the 2013-15 authorized State Building Program to include the construction of a skilled nursing facility at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King. The John R. Moses Skilled Nursing Facility will replace the current 200-bed facility.
- Bills Aimed at Heroine Reduction
  - [WI Act 194](#): Granting immunity from certain criminal prosecutions for offenses relating to a controlled substance or a controlled substance analog
  - [WI Act 195](#): Opioid treatment programs and making an appropriation
  - [WI Act 196](#): Development of a system of short-term sanctions for individuals who violate conditions of extended supervision, parole, probation, or a deferred prosecution agreement and granting rule-making authority
  - [WI Act 197](#): Providing grants to counties that offer substance abuse treatment and diversion from incarceration and making an appropriation
  - [WI Act 198](#): Programs for the disposal of drugs, including controlled substances, and certain medical or drug-related items, and the regulation of prescription drugs
  - [WI Act 199](#): Identification presentation and monitoring for certain prescription drugs
  - [WI Act 200](#): Training and agreements for administering the drug naloxone, requiring emergency medical technicians to carry naloxone, and immunity for certain individuals who administer naloxone
- [WI Act 203](#): Milwaukee County mental health functions, programs, and services, creation of the Milwaukee County Mental Health Board, and making an appropriation
- [WI Act 235](#): emergency detention pilot program in Milwaukee County
- [WI Act 236](#): regulation of hospitals, granting rule-making authority, and requiring the exercise of rule-making authority
- [WI Act 238](#): uses and disclosures of protected health information
- [WI Act 240](#): licensure of physicians; providing an exemption from emergency rule procedures; and granting rule-making authority
- [WI Act 241](#): allowing health care providers licensed outside the state to participate in and requirements on nonprofit agencies in the volunteer health care provider program
- [WI Act 242](#): inadmissibility of a statement of apology or condolence by a health care provider
- [WI Act 260](#): evaluation of infants for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and referral of infants who have that condition for services and treatment
- [WI Act 264](#): Alerts for missing adults at risk and making an appropriation.
- [WI Act 267](#): Providing that cannabidiol is not a tetrahydrocannabinol and dispensing cannabidiol as a treatment for a seizure disorder

- [WI Act 294](#): Therapeutic alternate drug selections in nursing homes, performance of patient services by a pharmacist, and the practice of pharmacy
- [Act 341](#): The definition and practice of dentistry for professional licensing purposes
- [Act 342](#): Accessing and obtaining patient health records by public defenders
- [Act 344](#): Additional providers in the volunteer health care provider program and proof of financial responsibility and malpractice insurance requirements for certain advanced practice nurses serving as volunteer health care providers
- [Act 345](#): A duty of podiatrists, chiropractors, dentists, and optometrists to inform patients of treatment options and granting rule-making authority
- [Act 354](#): A dental hygienist's administration of nitrous oxide inhalation analgesia and practice of dental hygiene
- [Act 357](#): Instructional programs for nurse aides and granting rule-making authority

## **RESEARCH AND PROGRAM TOOLS**

- [County Health Rankings 2014](#)
- [HIX 2.0 and HIX Compare: An examination of ACA implementation across all 50 states](#)
- Information on the Health Insurance Marketplace and Health Care Reform: [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov)
  - [Spanish Language Marketplace](#)
  - [Marketplace Enrollment Data](#)
  - HHS [Partner Official Resources](#)
- New and Updated Resources from the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#)
- New and Updated Resources from the [Commonwealth Fund](#)
  - [Health Reform Resource Center](#)
- [Enroll America](#) Resources
- New and Updated Resources from [HRSA](#)
- New and Updated Resources from [AHRQ](#)
- Wisconsin Toolbox:
  - [Enrollment for Health Wisconsin \(www.E4Healthwi.org\)](http://www.E4Healthwi.org)
    - [Statewide Enrollment Directory](#)
    - [Milwaukee Enrollment Directory](#)
  - [Individual Health Insurance Carriers in Wisconsin](#)
  - [Pharmaceutical Waste in Wisconsin's Water: Risks and Solutions](#) – materials from the [Evidence-Based Health Policy Project capitol briefing](#)

## **EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- [Diabetes of Wisconsin Symposium](#), Milwaukee, May 15-16
- [Wisconsin Health IT Conference](#), Madison, May 28
- [Wisconsin Health News Long-Term Care Briefing](#), Madison, June 3
- [WCHQ Statewide Quality Improvement Event](#), Wisconsin Dells, June 17
- [Wisconsin Rural Health Conference](#), Elkhart Lake, June 18-20

## Selected Tweets from our Twitter Feed

Please follow us on [Twitter @UWHealthPolicy](#) to receive notice of relevant reports, research, federal and state news.

#ACA employer mandate not needed - same number covered without it - reports @urbaninstitute  
<http://bit.ly/1gAooHV>

"What Surge? Nation's Primary Care System Holding Up Well So Far Under Obamacare" reports @philgalewitz @KHNews <http://bit.ly/1gkaFRy>

"An Overview of the Numerous #BadgerCare Changes Taking Effect on April 1" via @wiskids  
<http://bit.ly/1gZbRcf>

"End of Employer-Provided Health Plans" via @nytimes <http://nyti.ms/1ueJGur>, & endorsed yesterday by @stuartmbutler <http://bit.ly/1hhPWIP>

What role does evidence on benefits, risks, and costs play in making Top 5 lists of @ABIMFoundation #ChoosingWisely? <http://bit.ly/1qHJC1x>

Last month's @CDCgov report of 43% drop in childhood obesity challenged by @NateSilver538 #statisticsarecomplicated <http://53eig.ht/1i2Ct7k>

National Quality Forum to include SES, race, ethnicity in risk adjustment for health provider performance measures. <http://bit.ly/1rp5fqO>

#Milwaukee County 2014 Safety Net Clinic Referral Directory released by the Milwaukee Health Care Partnership <http://bit.ly/1iioHyP>

Health care spending rising because of utilization, not price: <http://bit.ly/1jOrqkv> and <http://wapo.st/QyyKlt>

International comparison from @sarahkliff: "Our health spending problem is all about prices" <http://bit.ly/1eVVqNS>

Study: Provider prices, not utilization of healthcare services, drive up healthcare costs. <http://bit.ly/1iEJpeb>

Fantastic infographics on How Americans Die from @BloombergNews <http://bloom.bg/1i35jsF>

10 recommendations for improving next year's #ACA enrollment period, without new legislation, from @FamiliesUSA <http://bit.ly/1fvkRnq>

"From Coverage to Care" from @CMSGov - to help newly insured choose a provider and effectively use health services <http://1.usa.gov/PVzUx4>

Funds available to states through @CMSSGov to bolster all-payer claims databases. @SHADAC map shows state efforts. <http://bit.ly/1U9edZ>

New #ACA enrollees more often need costly specialty drugs than those with job-based insurance, reports @KHNews <http://bit.ly/QbktAX>

Here's the analysis by @ExpressScripts of pharmacy claims by #ACA exchange plan enrollees: <http://bit.ly/PVZ2Ej>

"Sliver of Medicare Doctors Get Big Share of Payouts" reports @nytimes <http://nyti.ms/1hENQ4P>

Report from @SHADAC of ACS data: WI children's insurance 2008-2012: private declined 6.7%, public increased 6.7% <http://bit.ly/1hEPpzx>

When states add #dental to adult #Medicaid, dentists' participation in Medicaid increases, reports @nberpubs <http://bit.ly/1tsvYng>

Physician Compensation Report, 2014, by specialty, from @Medscape: FP avg annual salary \$176K, orthopedics \$413K <http://bit.ly/1lu64da>

Good news: @USCBO lowers estimated costs to states' #Medicaid expansion; Bad news: it's because lower take-up <http://bit.ly/1fqxiBX>

State mandate coverage of prescription #contraception leads to increase use of preventive services, via @IRP\_UW <http://bit.ly/1mFvLLX>

.@BoultonGuy reviews WI #ACA enrollment count, but note: up to ~77K of 140K sign-ups are adults who lost #Badgercare <http://bit.ly/R8uqQE>

Health spendings increase: "Americans are using the insurance they gained under #Obamacare".reports @BloombergNews <http://bloom.bg/1iStlqP>

#ACA price transparency rules for hospitals- <http://bit.ly/1rNhpHj> - seem consistent with existing WI law: <http://bit.ly/1fBG0iq>