

HEALTH CARE - AN ALASKAN EMERGENCY PERSPECTIVE

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Concerns about the “American Health Care Act”

- AHCA will hurt disproportionately Alaskans as it does not take into account higher Alaska cost and transportation issues
- Loss of protection for Essential Health Benefits like pregnancy which could not be purchased in Alaska prior to the ACA
- For vulnerable adults, tax credit will not provide the same financial relief for the cost of healthcare as health-care subsidies.
- Older adults are already more challenging to care for in Alaska. This population will be at further risk with the current AHCA plan.
- 28 K Alaskan lives are now covered in Alaska because of Medicaid expansion which given our state budget would likely lose insurance coverage
- The AHCA complicates the Medicaid enrollment process which will increase insurance gaps and hurt patients. 60 day retroactive enrollment and renewal every year should be maintained.

FIGURE 1

Premium Tax Credits Would Fall Sharply Under House Republican Plan

Difference in 2020 between average credit for marketplace consumers under Affordable Care Act and Republican plan



SOURCE: CBPP analysis

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“We cannot support the AHCA as drafted because of the expected decline in health insurance coverage and the potential harm it would cause to vulnerable patient populations,” James L. Madara, chief executive of the American Medical Association and a doctor

Key Principles

- Look for ways to pay for healthcare, not just insurance. With increasing deductibles and network limitations, insurance may not translate to actual healthcare.
- Support emergency services covered in any insurance plan based on lay person definition of emergency as long as EMTALA exists as a federal law
- Mental health parity
- Retain protection for pre-existing condition, no lifetime limits and allow children to stay on plan until age 26
- Healthcare will always be more expensive in Alaska and per-capita funding (block grants etc) will be very detrimental to our state
- Funding needs to be maintained and incentives increased for informational sharing of electronic medical records such as the PDMP (Prescription Drug Monitoring Program) and Emergency department information exchange programs.
- Support Health Advisory Panels and collaborative solutions. There are more solution to current challenges in healthcare than to decrease coverage or decrease services, incentivizing collaborative care and aligned goal of patients health will improve health, patient satisfaction, and save money.