



Virginia MIRC <vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov>

New MIRC Comment

1 message

Thu, Oct 3, 2013 at 11:23 AM

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

To: vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov

First Name - Kathy

Last Name - May

Organization Name - Virginia Consumer Voices

Comment - Take advantage of the opportunity to provide access to healthcare to our most vulnerable citizens.

 **MIRC.pdf**
24K

Please take advantage of the Opportunity to Expand Medicaid

Some argue that widening the Medicaid safety net is a bad idea. Their reasons range from selfish – “I won’t be able to access a doctor as quickly for my own daughter’s care if 400,000 newly insured Virginians flood the system” – to misleading claims -“Medicaid is a broken system that often harms the poor.”

Research tells a different story. A study published in the New England Journal of Medicine found that coverage through Medicaid saves lives and improves health for those newly enrolled who have typically had less preventive care, more physically taxing jobs and more health issues. Decades of research also shows that people with insurance are more likely to have regular care and are less likely to develop serious and expensive illnesses and disease. Healthier people are better prepared to succeed in school, at work and in life.

In contrast, people without insurance tend to delay care until they are very sick. And when they seek care, they go to hospital emergency rooms, the most expensive place to receive health care. Those medical bills often go unpaid, creating costs that end up being shifted to those already insured and taxpayers.

The vast majority of Virginia adults who would gain health insurance under the Medicaid expansion are in low-paying jobs that don’t come with health insurance. Their pay is too low to afford private insurance but too high to qualify for Medicaid under current rules. Others who would benefit include returning veterans, low-income workers, and workers who are in between jobs. Medicaid also provides low-wage workers with financial security by reducing the risk of medical debt. Over 400,000 uninsured, hard-working Virginians who are unable to afford coverage now would be able to obtain insurance through Medicaid expansion.

In addition, Medicaid expansion will create about 30,000 health care jobs in Virginia and adds \$5 million a day of federal revenue to the state.

Expanding Medicaid to more low-income families will help keep all Virginia families and communities strong and secure.

Kathy May

Director

Virginia Consumer Voices for Healthcare

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