

Work Requirements for Medicaid: Ineffective and Harmful

Republicans in Congress and the Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS) are encouraging work requirements for Medicaid recipients. **The evidence shows that work requirements do not increase employment or lift people out of poverty, but instead hurt vulnerable populations that depend on public benefits.** Reducing our Medicaid rolls through work requirements will not reduce health care costs but will only shift those costs to the state.

- **Most Medicaid beneficiaries already work.**
Data show that most Medicaid recipients who are able to work already do so. Three out of four non-elderly adults and children enrolled in Medicaid live in a family with at least one worker.¹
- **Evidence shows that work requirements do not increase employment.²**
Studies show that employment increases for individuals subject to work requirements are at most modest and disappear over time. The majority of individuals subject to work requirements remained in poverty.
- **Low-income individuals face numerous roadblocks and barriers to gainful employment.**
Work requirements do not break down the real barriers preventing low-income people from finding stable employment. People in poverty face obstacles like lack of living-wage jobs, low levels of education, chronic illness or mental health issues, lack of affordable childcare and transportation, criminal records, or a lack of social connections needed to find good jobs.³
- **Work requirements present administrative burdens for states to implement.**
The administration of work requirements in other programs has proved time consuming, lacking in real-time accuracy, and burdensome to states. In addition, many people on Medicaid have disabilities but don't have an official determination of disability, yet, so it would be difficult for states to determine who is physically and mentally capable of work.⁴
- **Programs that are most successful at raising employment boost the education and skills of program participants, not stripping them of health coverage.⁵**
If increasing employment is the true goal, then the data clearly demonstrates that the federal government and states should fund job training, subsidized job positions, child care assistance, and other work supports, the programs that DO make an impact on employment.

¹ <http://www.cbpp.org/research/health/medicaid-work-requirement-would-limit-health-care-access-without-significantly>

² <http://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/work-requirements-dont-cut-poverty-evidence-shows>

³ http://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/work-requirements-dont-cut-poverty-evidence-shows#_ftn3

⁴ https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/25/health/medicaid-work-requirement.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share&_r=0

⁵ <http://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/work-requirements-dont-cut-poverty-evidence-shows#finding4>