



Questions for Wisconsin Policymakers: How will Medicaid Block Grants impact me?

Policymakers in Washington and Wisconsin are discussing changing Medicaid to a block grant program. This will change the way Wisconsin delivers many Medicaid services to people with disabilities, older adults, families, and children. Medicaid block grants are intended to reduce federal Medicaid spending and reduce future growth in Medicaid budgets. It is important for Wisconsin residents with disabilities and older adults to ask their policymakers questions about proposed Medicaid changes. People are worried about how Medicaid block grants might impact their lives and whether it means their supports could be cut.

Please select the questions that are most relevant to your life or organization and ask them of your U.S. Senators, Congressional Representative, and state legislators.

Some Facts to Share with Policymakers

- One in five Wisconsinites who have disabilities, are older adults, are children, or are low-income working adults rely on Medicaid for health care and other essential supports.
- Medicaid programs in Wisconsin (like BadgerCare, SeniorCare, MAPP, Family Care, IRIS, children's waivers) help people with disabilities and older adults with basic health care and therapies, and often with daily living supports and personal cares like getting out of bed, going to the bathroom, respite, help with meals, transportation, and employment supports.
- Medicaid has allowed thousands of Wisconsin residents with disabilities and older adults to stay in their homes and avoid costly institutional care at significant savings to taxpayers.

Questions we hear from older adults, people with disabilities, and their families in Wisconsin.

How Will Medicaid Block Grants Impact Me

- Will block grants change whether I am eligible for Family Care/IRIS/personal care/children's waiver supports/MAPP/BadgerCare/CCS/CSP or other Medicaid programs?
- Will the long-term care services (Family Care, IRIS, waivers) I need be cut?
- Will I still have the same medical benefits I have today or will they be cut or even eliminated?
- Will I still have the same mental health and substance use disorder benefits I have today or will they be cut or eliminated?
- My care plan is what I need to be independent. Will my plan be cut even if my needs don't change?
- Will I still be able to choose and keep my doctors? Will my doctor still take Medicaid patients?
- Will I still get supports in my home, or will I be forced into an institution or nursing facility?
- Will my mom, who is currently receiving services in her own home, have her services reduced or eliminated, requiring me to leave my job to become a full-time caregiver?
- Wisconsin has made huge progress in ending wait lists that left people unsafe and affected their health. Will Wisconsin go back to waiting lists for Medicaid programs with lots of people unable to get needed help for years?
- Will children who are waiting for long-term supports in Wisconsin now have to wait even longer? Will the number of children on the waiting list increase?
- How will block grants impact Wisconsin children with disabilities who receive Medicaid funded supports like therapies, screenings, and healthcare?

- Will Wisconsin eliminate services like personal care and prescription drugs to save money?
- When block grants reduce funding, will that mean my family or I will have to pick up more costs or go without care?
- Will my son/daughter continue to receive the support they need to get and keep a job?
- Will I have reliable access to Medicaid transportation services to get to work and appointments?
- Will I be able to hire the workers I need to keep me living independently in my own home?
- Will there be less access to community mental health services that lead to more people hospitalized or in crisis?
- Will the SeniorCare program, which provides affordable prescription drugs, still be available and easy to use?

How Will Medicaid Block Grants Work

- What is a Medicaid Block Grant?
- Over time, will a block grant reduce the federal dollars Wisconsin receives for Medicaid?
- Will Medicaid still cover mandatory services and populations, or could I have needed services taken away or even be ineligible for supports under block grants?
- Will Wisconsin continue to cover people with disabilities in Medicaid?
- Statewide expansion of Family Care/IRIS will make Wisconsin one of the first states to end wait lists for adult long-term care. Can you promise that Wisconsin will continue to fund FC/IRIS and its current benefit package to permanently end wait lists – even if federal funding is reduced?
- How will Wisconsin account for unexpected costs or inflation with block grants? What happens if there is a recession and the need for BadgerCare increases?
- Will payments to providers be reduced? Will this impact whether I can stay in business?
- Are there changes to self-directed services under a block grant?
- How would a block grant affect medication costs? Will I have to pay some costs out of pocket?
- How will the state prioritize funding to make up for federal cuts and account for health care inflation? Will they choose to help address rising cost concerns in hospitals and nursing homes or focus on supporting people in community settings?
- How quickly would potential changes take effect and what safeguards will be in place to ensure the health and safety of current participants?
- A large percent of long-term care recipients are eligible for Medicare and Medicaid; what happens if both programs are changed at the same time? How will participants be supported?
- Will funding for county Medicaid programs be cut, creating longer waiting lists?

Can Medicaid Block Grants Address the Concerns I do have about Medicaid?

- Wisconsin residents already have difficulty finding certain types of providers - such as personal care, mental/behavioral health, community employment supports and dental care. How can we develop our provider network and ensure that providers are paid adequate rates in a block grant?
- Can block grants address the root causes of health care inflation and rising prescription costs?
- Reliable transportation—particularly to medical appointments and to jobs—already is a challenge in Wisconsin's Medicaid system. How will block grants improve transportation so people can get where they need to go to take care of their health and make an income?
- Wisconsin direct support provider agencies already are struggling to stay afloat and many have closed. This affects local economies all over the state. How can block grants address this crisis?
- Wisconsin already spends more Medicaid long-term care dollars on institutional settings than community settings. How will states be required to handle Medicaid funds? Will there still be rules, particularly ones that say people should be supported in the community and not in institutions?