



Medicaid Patients Depend on Family Physicians for their Care

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The IAFP supports high quality care and maintenance of basic essential health services for Medicaid recipients. Primary care is the foundation for cost containment and quality improvement, especially for vulnerable populations. Here are some proven principles and suggested solutions:

- FMAP (Federal Medical Assistance Percentage) should be increased;
- Coverage of tobacco cessation counseling, pharmaceuticals and other assistive methods should be included;
- Coverage of pharmaceutical and oral health benefits should be mandatory;
- The homeless and medically uninsurable should be covered;
- Enhanced payments for primary care lead to increased primary care physician participation in Medicaid and improved beneficiary access;
- Payment for primary care services should be at least equal to Medicare;
- The patient-centered medical home model of care with appropriate payment for case management/care coordination should be implemented broadly;
- Blended payments that include monthly care management payments and robust quality rewards can help reduce inpatient and emergency department costs and utilization.

Primary care physicians are most needed to care for patients with complex and chronic conditions

Patients with complicated, chronic health conditions see primary care physicians more than subspecialists for their care, according to research by the Robert Graham Center for Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary Care. In fact, **86 percent of visits for asthma occurred in primary care physician offices**, compared to 14 percent in subspecialist offices, and **84 percent of visits for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) were in primary care physician offices**, compared to 16 percent in subspecialist offices. Many patients have multiple chronic conditions, so physicians with expertise in the diagnosis and treatment of the whole person is instrumental to ensuring that all their health needs are met. IAFP will continue to speak out during the ongoing debate about Medicaid reform with the goal of preserving and strengthening this program upon which so many vulnerable Illinoisans rely.

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