



Top Stories

WI Legislature Approves Bills In Extraordinary Session

Earlier this week, lawmakers worked through the night to pass a series of bills in an extraordinary session--several of which relate to healthcare delivery.

The legislation will require state health officials to implement a **federal Medicaid waiver, approved in October** by President Donald Trump's administration, that will add work requirements and copayments for some adults enrolled in the BadgerCare Plus program.

Governor-elect Evers had previously said he **might try to withdraw the federal waiver** that would implement those changes.

In the midst of the legislation, **thirty-three healthcare organizations sent a letter to lawmakers** asking them to strip the Medicaid provisions from the bills. The letter cited concern with the unintended consequences of the legislation, combined with the expedited timetable and lack of consultation from groups.

The legislation would also require **legislative approval** to withdraw Wisconsin from a multi-state lawsuit to overturn the Affordable Care Act, something Governor-elect Evers and Attorney General-elect Josh Kaul signaled they would do once in office.

One bill that was promised but failed to pass: **state-wide protections for those with pre-existing conditions**, with exceptions.

Governor Walker has signaled that he will sign the legislation. Governor-elect Evers says he **isn't ruling out a lawsuit** to challenge the measures.

(Sources: The Cap Times, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Wisconsin Public Radio, Associated Press, NBC 15, and Wisconsin State Journal)

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Michael75 on Unsplash

Successes and Challenges of Rural Health Care

Marshfield Clinic Health System exists in more than fifty Wisconsin locations, reaching across much of rural

Wisconsin. The WisconsinEye Public Affairs Network recently caught up with the CEO of MCHS, Dr. Susan Turney, and got her take on the state of rural health care in Wisconsin. (Source: Wisconsin Eye)



Wisconsin Eye

Watch

Rural School Closings Increasing

Across the country, rural schools are being forced to shut down as more families move to urban areas and funding sources dry up. In Arena, Wisconsin, six-year-old Brady Schlamp must now travel 10 miles to school. His former school, right around the corner, was shuttered. PBS News Hour reports on school closures and how they can cause logistical challenges, emotional fallout and community divisions. (Source: PBS)



@ruralhealthwi on Instagram

Watch

More News

- What do we know about burnout among physician assistants (PAs)? A new **literature review** gives a short history of the profession and examines the prevalence of burnout and career satisfaction for PAs. (Source: National Academy of Sciences)
- Rural hospital leaders may struggle to find the appropriate balance between local decision-making and health system affiliation requirements. A **policy brief** looks at details to consider when looking at affiliation. (Source: Rural Health Research & Policy Centers & Rural Policy Research Institute)
- The final date to enroll in health insurance through the federal marketplace is coming soon on December 15th. Fewer people in Wisconsin are signing up for health plans on the exchange when compared to last year. **Why?** (Source: Wisconsin Public Radio)
- The use of amphetamines and opioids by pregnant women has **grown in recent years**, particularly in rural areas. Quitting amphetamines can be more difficult than quitting opioids, due to a lack of medication to help with withdrawal. (Source: National Public Radio)

Funding & Opportunities

- The Warren H. Pearse Women's Health Policy Award will provide **\$10,000 to support research** that will explore an aspect of health care policy that assists, defines, or restricts the ability of a physician to deliver healthcare to women in the general population. (Deadline: December 15th)
- The deadline for Wisconsin residents who sustained property damage from flooding and storms in August and September to apply for **federal disaster assistance** is nearing. Renters, homeowners, and businesses who were affected in select counties are eligible to apply for assistance. (Deadline: December 17th)
- Rural hospitals, rural community-based ambulatory patient care centers, community mental health centers, Rural Health Clinics, health centers operated by the Indian Health Service, tribal organizations, faith-based and community-based organizations, and certain schools of medicine can apply for **grants to develop new rural residency programs in family medicine, internal medicine, and psychiatry** to support expansion of the rural physician workforce. (Deadline: March 4th, 2019; Applicant Webinar: December 17th, 1pm Central)
- Matching grants of up to \$20,000 are available to **support community-based initiatives that provide dental homes to children** who are underserved and/or have limited access to oral healthcare. (Deadline: December 21st)
- Nonprofits in rural areas and towns with populations of 10,000 or less can apply for **technical assistance and training grants to evaluate solutions to water and waste disposal problems in rural areas**. (Deadline: December 31st)

Events

- **December 11th:** A webinar will outline **how to use laws and policies as tools to support health aging in healthy communities**. 12pm Central.
- **December 12th:** A webinar will examine **rural health insurance market challenges** and how they apply to public insurance programs. See the **related report** from August of this year. 1pm Central.



Wisconsin Office of Rural Health

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