

Legislature Rolls Out Health Care Bill

Due to the rising costs of health care and the lack of access to care in Iowa, the House and Senate Human Resources committees will be working on a health care bill that will address these issues and build upon Iowa's current health care system.

The legislation, based on the unanimously approved recommendations of the Legislative Health Care Commission, will provide quality health care to adult Iowans who cannot afford insurance coverage.

IowaCare Program

In an effort to provide quality health care closer to home for Iowans, the bill adds a regional provider network to the existing IowaCare health plan, which serves adults up to 200% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Currently, Iowans on the IowaCare health plan must travel to Des Moines or Iowa City to receive care.

In addition, the bill creates a new plan called IowaCare Plus for adults between 200-400% FPL, with premium assistance for those up to 300%. Individuals between 300-400% pay on their own within affordability guidelines passed last year. IowaCare Plus also uses the new regional provider network so Iowans can receive medical care closer to home.

Iowa Choice Exchange

The bill also creates the Iowa Choice Exchange, which is an information-only clearinghouse. The exchange provides choice among competing plans by making it easy for individuals and families not covered through an employer to obtain coverage information that is standardized and transparent. The exchange will also collect quality data.

Lastly, a Diabetic Registry is created. The registry will collect data to assist medical providers in tracking and improving care of patients with diabetes.

The bill stipulates that the expansion program and information clearinghouse be implemented as funds become available. The House and Senate Human Resources Committees must approve the bill before it is debated in either chamber.