



# SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 19, 2014

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## **81,731 Wisconsinites Living in Poverty Access Health Care through Medicaid**

*People Transitioning into Private Market through the Exchanges Have until May 30 to Purchase Plans*

**Milwaukee** – Today, the Department of Health Services (DHS) announced 81,731 Wisconsinites living in poverty now have health care through Medicaid due to Governor Scott Walker’s entitlement reforms. Before Governor Walker’s reforms, waiting lists and enrollment caps kept these childless adults living in poverty from being able to access this vital safety net. A link to the enrollment report can be found [here](#).

“Our entitlement reforms make sure Medicaid is a safety net for our state’s neediest citizens and protect Wisconsin’s taxpayers from the uncertainty surrounding the federal government’s implementation of the Affordable Care Act,” said Governor Walker. “Due to our reforms, 81,731 people living in poverty now have health care through Medicaid, and Wisconsin is the only state to not take the expansion with no health coverage gap.”

In addition, DHS announced 62,776 people with incomes above the federal poverty level needed to transition into the marketplace at the end of March. Individuals above the poverty level are able to access federal subsidies and can choose to purchase plans through the federal exchange or in the private market.

Wisconsin state agencies implemented an aggressive outreach effort to increase awareness of changes made necessary by the federal law and to provide information and assistance for those transitioning as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

In September 2013, the Department of Health Services mailed letters to individuals who are transitioning from BadgerCare Plus to the exchange. In October 2013, the Department also made follow-up calls to all who were sent a notice to ensure they received and understood the letter and to offer assistance with applying for appropriate services based on their circumstances. Furthermore, after the failed federal rollout of Healthcare.gov left most users unable to sign up for health plans through the exchange, DHS mailed out tens of thousands of paper applications in November 2013.

A list of the 10 different mailings can be found on the DHS website [here](#).

DHS continues to focus on providing information to the adults transitioning to make sure they are aware they have until May 30, 2014 to apply for and purchase private health insurance through the federal exchange. In April, DHS sent letters to the people transitioning and the Department will be making phone calls in the next week to make them aware of their options and the upcoming deadline.

The Wisconsin plan reformed the Medicaid entitlement to preserve it for the neediest, while protecting our taxpayers from uncertainty related to the federal government's funding. For the first time in our state, Wisconsin is providing health coverage for everyone living in poverty through Medicaid and allowing those above that level to access health insurance through the exchanges or the private market.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, Wisconsin is the only state to not take the Medicaid expansion that has no gap in coverage. The report can be found [here](#).

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