

## Possible Objections to BadgerCare Expansion

Despite the obvious benefits of Medicaid Expansion, objections will be raised when talking to others.

A list of common objections and possible responses are provided below. When answering objections, respond but keep your response as short as possible. If someone is thoroughly convinced Medicaid expansion is wrong, you may at least give them something to think about.

1. What happens when the Federal assistance that is supporting the expansion is diminished or goes away?
  - Funding for Medicaid expansion remains at 90% at 2020 and beyond.
  - 36 other states (72%) including DC has accepted Medicaid expansion. It is not likely this program will disappear without additional legislation being passed to accommodate that change.
  
2. In Wisconsin, people 100%-138% FPL are already covered by the ACA. BadgerCare expansion is not needed.
  - The ACA is a poor substitute for people living near the poverty line. The ACA still requires you to pay premiums, deductibles, and co-pays. The loss of benefits when transitioning from BadgerCare to the ACA is a disincentive to improving one's economic situation.
  - The second response is by cutting BadgerCare off at 100 % FPL, the BadgerCare program cost taxpayers approximately \$200 million more per year.
  
3. Expanding Medicaid will drive up the insurance rates for people not on BadgerCare and reduce the number of healthcare professionals because Medicaid reimbursement rates are too low.
  - Insurance rates for people in the marketplace will be reduced because the marketplace risk pool will be healthier and the incidence of uncompensated (free) emergency room care will be reduced. It has been shown that insurance rates in states that have expanded Medicaid have 7% lower insurance rates<sup>1</sup>.
  - Are reimbursement rates too low or healthcare costs too high?
    - Americans spend more on healthcare than other developed countries, more than twice the average,<sup>2,4</sup> in many cases with less healthy outcomes<sup>3</sup>.
    - The pharmaceutical industry is able to realize net profit margins ranging from 12 percent to 26 percent<sup>8</sup> because in America demand is high for new and improved drugs and alternatives are not available because of patent restrictions. It is true, these profits help fund new research but also go to pay dividends, retained earnings and executive compensation as well.
    - The relative lack of competition within medical/hospital/drug industry has allowed high prices to cover for things like high administrative costs, inefficiencies, and waste<sup>5</sup>.
    - On average, specialists, nurses and primary care doctors earn significantly more in the U.S. compared to other countries<sup>6</sup> and yet, doctors rate patient relationships and intellectual stimulation as more important than financial rewards. They also site considerable frustration with administrative tasks that keep them from seeing more patients<sup>7</sup>.

- The serious nature of many health care problems and, to some extent, the fact that you are insured, is a disincentive for healthcare consumers to shop around for the “best value.” As a result, the for-profit nature of the industry charges all that the market will bear.
4. Government needs to be smaller, not larger. Healthcare programs raise our taxes and increase the federal deficit.
    - This argument is usually made by someone who is blind to the many benefits they enjoy that would not be possible without government such as infrastructure and regulations that allows business to flourish, consumer protections, parks, fire and police protections, clean water and air, and military defense.
    - Basic healthcare directly impacts the safety and wellbeing of more people than a strong military or police force. It therefore needs to be considered a human right guaranteed, protected, and regulated by government.
    - We are all part of a larger community and the benefits derived thereof, cannot be realized without recognition and support for the common good. Since we all benefit from the common good at some point in our lives, it is our duty as citizens to financially support it.
  5. I do not want to support those who choose to live an unhealthy lifestyle. Healthcare should be a commodity. If you can't afford it, you will need to take better care of yourself.
    - No one wants to be unhealthy and yet we all make decisions at some point that can adversely affect our health. Realize also that the temptation and misinformation that trigger unhealthy choices comes from many sources such as fast food and soft drink industry advertisements.
    - The fact that some people do not live healthy lives is exactly the reason to support a healthcare system that promotes and provides for healthy living. The possibility that someone might make unhealthy choices is a poor reason to deny thousands of people life-saving healthcare that they would otherwise be unable to afford.

## References

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