

Dear Legislator,

It is imperative that Medicaid be expanded in Kansas. I am a retired social worker, having worked with Veterans Affairs. I would see firsthand what effect lack of access to health care has on veterans who were not eligible for care through the VA at that time. This extended to their family members who had chronic conditions--heart disease, emphysema, kidney disease, diabetes--and it was vital at that time they get medical care.

It is even more expensive if one's health deteriorates so that hospitalization is necessary. As per the Census Bureau, there are an estimated 348, 097 people in Kansas who lack health insurance. According to a report by the Kansas Health Institute, December, 2014, the Kansas uninsured rate went up to 27.7% from 24.8%, people aged 19-25 were most likely to be uninsured at the rate of 21.4%. Children aged 0-17 were 6.1% in 2009 but increased to 7.1% in 2013. Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) had the largest growth, from 26.4% in 2009 to 31.9% in 2013. Employment provided health insurance declined from 59.6% in 2009 to 56.7% in 2013. It is estimated that 43.9% of the eligible population would be covered by Medicaid if the income level were to be set at 138% of poverty.

For the public's sake Medicaid must be expanded. Thank you.

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