



Member E-Bulletin

June 22, 2017

Ohio Council Members:

Call to Action Explanation

The Ohio General Assembly has entered the final phase of deciding on the state budget for the next two years-and will likely finalize the budget by **Monday, June 26**. The current version of the budget includes language that would freeze Group VIII enrollment (AKA Medicaid expansion enrollment), starting July 1, 2018. Under this language, once you are ineligible for enrollment under expansion for any reason you can no longer re-enroll under expansion. **We believe this may lead to over half of the current enrollees losing coverage in just the first year.**

The legislature has also included requirements that only those working, in school, over 55 years old, in a treatment program, or with a severe mental or physical illness will be able to keep coverage starting in 2017. This language, commonly referred to as a "work requirement" means that someone looking for a job, or waiting for a spot to open up in a treatment program, will lose their health care entirely.

Individually, these provisions are harmful, but together they are lethal. Please raise your voice for the hundreds of thousands of Ohioans who currently rely on the extended Medicaid coverage so that they can continue to take care of their basic health needs, chronic physical and mental health diagnoses and/or stay on a path to recovery from drug and alcohol addictions.

TAKE ACTION! Please contact your State Representative(s) and Senators! Remind them of the value of Medicaid and to tell them these changes are unacceptable. Medicaid coverage is a critical tool in addressing the behavioral health crisis gripping Ohio. On behalf of the hundreds and thousands of vulnerable Ohioans' whose healthcare and livelihood are at risk, **please reach out now and let your voice be heard!**

Sample Message

The current version of HB 49 includes language that will remove healthcare access for hundreds of thousands of Ohioans over the next biennium.

As you prepare to cast a final vote on Ohio's budget, please keep in mind the 700,000 Ohioans who are struggling to overcome chronic physical and mental health illnesses, addiction, poverty and other challenges. Medicaid expansion allows them to keep the health care that aids in overcoming those challenges while also allowing Ohio's Community Health Centers to expand appropriate capacity, adding providers, locations, integrating additional services like Medication Assisted Treatment, and expanding hours of operation to meet community need.

Please remove the Medicaid enrollment freeze and work requirements from HB 49-give Ohioans a chance to be healthy and productive!

Sincerely,

Teresa Lampl, Associate Director
The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers
35 East Gay Street - Suite 401
Columbus, OH 43215-3138
Phone: (614) 228-0747
Fax: (614) 228-0740
www.TheOhioCouncil.org

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