



Utah's Uninsurable

SPEAK UP

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Andrea, Age 22

At 22 years of age, Andrea has worries beyond those of many people. When Andrea was 13 she was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma, stage four. The cancer had spread to all of her lymph nodes and lungs. With no family history of cancer, Andrea's family was shocked to learn that she had cancer. Luckily the family had health insurance and was able to access the wonderful services of Primary Children's Medical Center. Nine years later, Andrea doesn't let cancer define who she is or how she is going to live her life, but cancer has impacted the path she walks.

Left without insurance...

Andrea's mother Cindy hasn't stopped worrying about her daughter, only her worries are a bit different than most mothers. *"We were fine until Andrea was 19 and uninsurable. She was dumped, and we were left wobbling."* Under Cindy and her husband's health plan through the military, a dependent can only be covered with their insurance past the age of 18 if they are a full time student. Left without insurance, Andrea and Cindy looked for other options and found the Primary Care Network (PCN), a state program that only covers primary care visits and limited prescription drugs. Unfortunately the program didn't pan out to be what they hoped or needed. As Cindy explained, *"we are mostly disappointed with the PCN. It was a lot of work to get Andrea on the program and then it didn't help much. PCN didn't cover any of the treatments she needed and there was no doctor in the area who would take PCN! We haven't been able to get all of the tests done that she needs because we can't afford to."*

Trying to get ahead...

Like most young adults, Andrea is trying to plan for her future. Yet, due to cancer treatments, she struggles to attain her goals. *"I don't have enough education to get a good paying job. I like my job now, but it's not what I want to do for the rest of my life."* Andrea was in school to become a vet tech and then later tried to go to school to get her elementary education degree. Both times Andrea was kicked out of school because of missing too many days. Lingering side effects from chemotherapy, mainly a depressed immune system, impact Andrea's life. *"My immune system is bad so I get sick all the time. At least 2 days a month I have to stay home from work, and it's more than that in the fall and winter. My current job works with me, but the schools just wouldn't."*

Hope for the future...

Cindy has to have hope, *"I wish they [legislators] would get it together so that someone who has a catastrophic event doesn't have to pay for it the rest of their life, especially if they are young. Now, because Andrea hasn't been well enough to get the education she needs she's just stuck. It's a lot for a young person who works for only \$7 an hour."*