Health Matters
Utah Health Policy Project
healthpolicyproject.org
UHPP

The Longest Game in Town

As Medicaid expansion goes into overtime, fans of closing the coverage gap must stay engaged.

If you left the 2015 Utah legislative session wondering, "What happened to Medicaid expansion?" you aren't alone.

Many Utahns were shocked when the session ended on March 12 with no solution. Gov. Herbert's Healthy Utah plan was defeated in a House committee, while competing plans were similarly neutralized. The 72,000 Utahns living in the coverage gap—and their equally numerous supporters—were left with nothing except hoarse lungs and elevated blood pressure. For a session that started with bold pledges to tackle big and transformative issues, the Medicaid expansion debate ended with a whimper and most post-mortems of the 2015 session labeled the whole process a failure in governance.

So is it even worthwhile to review what happened? We think yes, because the strongest arguments and the biggest misperceptions raised during the session still matter as the debate goes into overtime. But since a normal legislative recap is boring, we've re-imagined the 2015 legislative session as a playoff-style showdown between Healthy Utah and the field of coverage plans that rose to challenge it. The only caveat to this approach is that Utah's Medicaid politics isn't a game when your family's well-being depends on the outcome--and we know thousands of Utahns waiting for this "game" to end.

Round 1: Healthy Utah vs. Frail Utah
In December 2014 the Health Reform Task Force

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April-May 2015

May 5-6, 2015
5th Annual Conference on Poverty
Organized by the Community Action Partnership of Utah
Registration (link)

Health Care Roundtable
>>A bi-weekly gathering of advocates, stakeholders, and others interested in health policy and legislation.

Wednesday, May 6, 2015
Health Care Roundtable
American Cancer Society (941 E. 3300 S, #100, Salt Lake City, UT)
1:15pm-2:15pm
Contact: RyLee Curtis (email)

Thursday, May 14, 2015
Utah Cancer Action Network (UCAN) Conference
DoubleTree by Hilton

attempted to disqualify the Healthy Utah Plan even before the competition got underway.

Continue reading here

How do we know the ACA is working?

At UHPP we've decided to ignore the political theater that surrounds the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Instead, we've focused our energy on explaining how national health reform—including the ACA—is creating new coverage options here in Utah.

Read more here

Take Care Utah to the rescue

Many of the people and organizations featured on KUTV's investigative series *Get Gephardt* would rather be anywhere else. But not Take Care Utah (TCU). In late March KUTV's Matt Gephardt profiled how TCU navigators help Utah families learn about their new health insurance options.

Here's how it happened

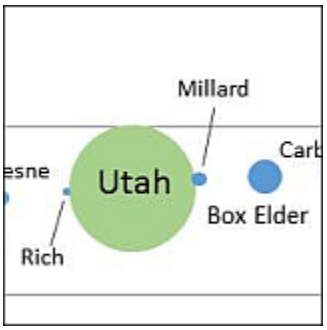
Registration (link)
Flyer (link)

Thursday, May 14, 2015
Designing a Medicaid Expansion That is Fiscally Responsible
Utah Breakfast Club Event
Utah State Capitol Complex, State Office Building Auditorium
11:30am-1:30pm
Registration (link)

Thursday, May 14, 2015
Panel discussion on Intergenerational Poverty and Utah's Future
The Economic Club of Utah
Rose Wagner Theater
138 West 300 South, SLC, UT
3pm-4:30pm
Information / free registration (link)

May 14-15, 2015
AUCH Annual Primary Care Conference
Utah Cultural Celebration Center
1355 West 3100 South, West Valley City, UT
Registration (link)

See entire calendar here



We make health insurance easy

Take Care Utah can help you with enrollment questions and sign-ups. Plus, we're gearing up for the next Open Enrollment period that begins Nov. 1, 2015.

Check us out here

Why is Lehi going crazy for Obamacare?

Utah County contains half the population of Salt Lake County... yet Utah County's ACA enrollment almost equaled its much bigger neighbor to the north. Why did this happen?

UHPP has answers here

Fill in your knowledge gaps

The website coverthegap.org is your one-stop shop to learn about the Healthy Utah Plan, meet real Utahns stuck in the gap, and contact your legislators.

Go to coverthegap.org

Accountable Care goes rural

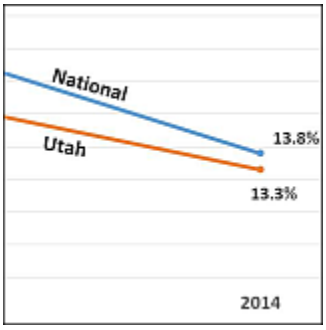
This summer the state of Utah plans to extend the range of the state's Medicaid Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) to nine more counties, including rural areas for the first time.

Read more here

Kids rule (on Utah's ACA marketplace)

140,612 Utahns purchased insurance on healthcare.gov this year--and finding out who they are (and where they live) means a lot for the future of health reform in Utah.

Learn more here



All that falls must converge

Utah's uninsured rate dropped 15% between 2013 and 2014. Is it a coincidence that tens of thousands of Utah families also signed up for ACA insurance, or not?

Review the latest numbers here

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