

The Future of Health Insurance in Wisconsin: Top **10** Things to Know

1 Most Wisconsinites will keep their current insurance!

Most Wisconsinites who already have health insurance will keep their current form of coverage in 2014. The majority of people who get insurance through their employer will continue to benefit from that coverage. Also, there are no significant changes to Medicare, BadgerCare coverage for children or pregnant women, or to Medicaid coverage for the elderly and people with disabilities.

2 Most people who already have insurance will see improvements.

Nearly everyone will benefit from some of the insurance improvements included in the Affordable Care Act (ACA), such as receiving most preventative care for free and not being able to be turned away or charged more because of a person's gender or a pre-existing condition like diabetes.

3 You might get financial assistance paying for health insurance.

The law creates a Health Insurance Marketplace, which is a new way to shop for health coverage. Most individuals and families who buy private coverage through the Marketplace will qualify for tax credits to lower their monthly premiums or reduce their copayments and deductibles. The lower your income, the higher the tax credit, and you can get the discount at the time you enroll.

4 The new Marketplace includes many insurance plan options.

The Marketplace enables people to get information about their health coverage options and to compare benefits, quality, and price. It facilitates comparison shopping by grouping plans into four categories ("metal tiers") based on the amount of cost-sharing (such as co-pays and deductibles). Catastrophic plans and stand-alone dental plans also may be available. The Marketplace also enables people to enroll in BadgerCare or Medicaid, and it tells those buying private coverage if they are eligible for financial assistance. (People below 250% of the poverty level will get larger tax subsidies if they choose a "silver" plan.)

5 Many parents will lose their BadgerCare coverage.

State lawmakers decided to reduce the eligibility ceiling for parents to the poverty level (\$23,550 for a family of 4), which means that about 77,000 current BadgerCare participants will lose their coverage on April 1, 2014. These individuals will either need to access insurance through an employer or sign up for subsidized private insurance through the new Marketplace. Nearly all of these individuals losing BadgerCare coverage will be eligible for financial assistance when choosing an insurance plan on the Marketplace.

6 More adults without dependent children will be eligible for BadgerCare coverage.

BadgerCare coverage will be expanded to cover about 83,000 more adults without dependent children (sometimes called childless adults) with income below the federal poverty level (\$11,490 for a single person or \$15,510 for a couple). This policy change, which takes effect on April 1, 2014, will allow for many of the lowest income childless adults to get the coverage they need at little to no cost.

7 There are some improvements to the existing individual insurance market.

Individual plans will improve because they will cover more services, provide better access to preventive care, and must cover preexisting conditions. The premiums will be higher for some people, but the co-pays and deductibles will generally be lower, and federal subsidies will reduce the premiums and co-pays for many people.

8 Everyone needs insurance: Individual mandate.

There is a new "individual mandate" that requires most individuals to have health insurance. There are a number of exceptions.

9 Enroll for Marketplace coverage between Oct 1st & March 31st.

The Health Insurance Marketplace open enrollment period begins on October 1, 2013, and ends on March 31, 2014. To have coverage that begins April 1st, individuals who are losing their BadgerCare eligibility at the end of March need to purchase insurance through the Marketplace by March 15th, 2014.

10 HOW DO I APPLY for BadgerCare or private coverage through the Marketplace?

Go to www.healthcare.gov for more information or to sign up for BadgerCare or private health insurance. You can also call the Health Insurance Marketplace Call Center if you have questions: 1-800-318-2596.