

Support HB5559

The Medicaid Access Monitoring Act

(Rep Wallace)

The problem:

Illinois Medicaid has recently undergone a significant transition, moving from mostly fee-for-service to mostly managed care. Medicaid managed care plans, the State, providers, and patients are all doing their best to make this transition successful, but the State has no mechanism to know how well the new system is doing in providing Medicaid enrollees access to doctors and other needed services. **The State must do more to ensure Medicaid health plans and the health care system they rely on can provide timely access to health care providers of all types.**

What the bill does:

- **Requires the state to survey a sample of each Medicaid managed care plan's provider network** to ensure that the contact information is accurate, the providers are participating in the plan, they are accepting new patients, and the wait time to obtain an initial appointment is within required timeframes.
- **Stipulates that data must be collected for primary care doctors, specialists, behavioral health professionals, dentists and hospitals in each Medicaid managed care region.**
- **Directs the state to use a well-established and accurate research method developed by an experienced academic or research organization.** Medicaid managed care plans and other stakeholders will have input into the design to ensure it is a fair assessment.
- **Specifies that the results of the survey will be published annually** and used to inform future efforts by the State, managed care, and providers to improve access for Medicaid enrollees.

Why this bill is necessary:

- **Medicaid enrollees need easy access to preventative and primary care health services** in order to stay healthy, lower state costs, and avoid depending on costly Emergency Room visits for their care.
- **The State needs data on Medicaid enrollees' access to doctors and other health care professionals so that it has the information needed to develop strategies for continued improvement.** Anecdotal experience suggests that access problems exist, but comprehensive data is needed to fully understand how to address it.
- **Reliable and low-cost methods to conduct access surveys are already in use in many states,** including Ohio, New York, Georgia, and California. The Federal Government and Managed Care Entities also frequently use these methods to evaluate access to services.
- **The federal government will pay up to 75% of the cost** of sorts of evaluations and has identified access surveys as the most effective process for monitoring provider networks.

Everyone should be able to see a health care provider when they need it. Support the Medicaid Access Monitoring Act to ensure health care access for all Illinoisans!

For more information, please contact:

Dan Rabbitt, Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights, drabbitt@heartlandalliance.org, 443-401-6142
Nadeen Israel, EverThrive Illinois, nisrael@everthriveil.org, 847-620-9758
Dan Frey, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, dfrey@aidschicago.org, 847-471-0379

Supporting Organizations (list in formation)

AgeOptions

AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC)

Chicago Coalition for the Homeless (CCH)

EverThrive Illinois

Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)

Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA)

Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA)

Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law

SEIU Healthcare Illinois

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