

REALITY CHECK

THE COSTS OF LIVING FOR MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

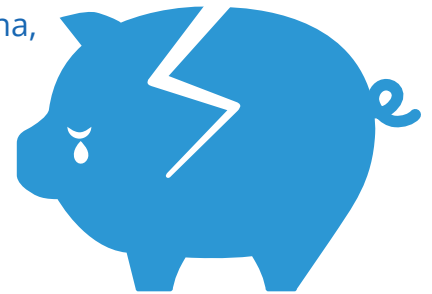


Challenging Math for People Living with Disabling Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders

WHAT "COUNTS" AS POVERTY?

According to the federal government, poverty is a single person earning \$12,060 or less per year. This equals \$1,005 per month. In South Carolina,

- 687,400 South Carolinians live at or below the Federal Poverty Level
- 1,006,300 South Carolinians live between 100-199% of the Federal Poverty Level



WHO QUALIFIES FOR MEDICAID?

- In South Carolina, individuals with incomes above \$11,772 cannot qualify for Medicaid, unless they receive Social Security Disability benefits.
- Medicaid is the primary source of health care for people living with mental illness and a growing resource for people living with addiction.

REAL NUMBERS, HARD MATH

FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL INCOME

\$12,060

+

NO FRILLS COST OF LIVING

(\$28,884)

-\$16,836

THE REAL COSTS OF LIVING IN CHARLESTON, SC

A no-frills budget, excluding health care costs, for an individual in Charleston is \$28,884.

The cost of living in rural South Carolina is \$313 less per month.

HOUSING/
1 BR Apartment
\$725

\$2,000

FOOD/
\$9 a day
\$271

TAXES/
UTILITIES
\$450

\$1,000

TRANSPOR-
TATION
\$482

OTHER:
clothing,
toiletries, etc
\$480

\$2,407



Many states have increased cost-sharing requirements for Medicaid recipients. Cost sharing can include copayments, cost-sharing and monthly premiums.



For people with significant health care needs and who are living in poverty, cost-sharing can prevent access to effective and essential services.



After increasing cost-sharing in Oregon and Wisconsin, significant numbers of people left the health care program and resorted to the emergency room for care. Further, the administrative costs of the program may exceed the funds received from enrollees.



**THE PRICE OF
INCREASING
COST-SHARING
IN MEDICAID
DOESN'T ADD UP**

WHAT IS?

SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

More than 1 in 5 uninsured adults with an opioid addiction have a serious mental illness.

Nationally, uninsured adults are less likely to have received treatment for addiction than those covered by Medicaid, and drug addiction is the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S.

In South Carolina, 226,000 people have a serious mental illness, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or depression. These conditions often impact a person's ability to communicate with others, take care of themselves, and understand the world around them.

By 2015, over 2 million people were addicted to prescription opioids and 591,000 people were addicted to heroin. In South Carolina alone, 761 people lost their lives to drug overdose, a 9 percent increase from the year before.

WHAT IS?

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI) AND SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE (SSDI)

People diagnosed with a serious mental illness often qualify for Medicaid through their eligibility for Social Security disability benefits. Individuals who qualify for SSDI receive on average \$13,578 per year, and those who qualify for SSI receive up to \$8,820 per year. SSDI and SSI are provided to individuals who cannot work due to a serious medical or mental illness, condition, or injury. In most states, eligibility for SSI confers eligibility for Medicaid. Generally, SSDI recipients are eligible for Medicare after two years, but may also qualify for Medicaid.