

# Family Planning Waiver Program

The Family Planning Waiver program is a Medicaid program that provides health care services such as cervical and breast cancer screens, sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment, and access to birth control to over 64,000 Wisconsin low-income women and teens ages 15 to 44. AB 991 and SB 552 threaten the continuation of this program by eliminating the participation of 15 to 17 year olds, thereby reducing the cost savings of the program and requiring the state to seek a new agreement with the federal government.

The federal government pays 90% of this program. According to DHFS, in 2006, the program will attract estimated \$10.1 million federal dollars into Wisconsin and in 2007 the program will attract estimated \$11.7 million federal dollars into Wisconsin.

The FPW saves millions of dollars each year by preventing unintended pregnancies.

- o The latest DHFS estimates indicate that this program saves upwards of \$30 million dollars a year ( \$36.4 million cost savings less \$5.8 million in annual costs of the program). In one quarter alone in 2003, the family planning services provided by the FPW prevented 1,278 unintended pregnancies.

- o The annual cost of providing health services under the Family Planning Waiver program is \$172 per patient as opposed to \$7,132 in birth and delivery costs per each Medicaid enrollee.

A recent fiscal estimate by DHFS concluded that excluding 15-17 year olds from the program would result in losing \$7,474,400 million in cost savings.

- o 85% of teen births in Wisconsin are paid for by Wisconsin taxpayers.

The Family Planning Waiver is estimated to reduce teen pregnancy by 15%. In 2002, approximately 6,800 Wisconsin teens gave birth. In 2003, the first year of the program, the Healthy Women Program averted 178 teen births.

Current Medicaid rules require the inclusion of the 15-17 year old age group in standard Medicaid coverage. Therefore, the Medicaid program would have two sets of rules for the same population.

Reviewing the Sexually Transmitted Infection statistics for the Western Region; all reported STD cases. Of the 2,044 cases, 558 or 27% were to 15-19 year olds.

In the Western Region, from 2000-2004 there was a total increase of 33% in STD cases and specifically, a 34% increase in Chlamydia.

It makes sense to maintain the Family Planning Waiver, to assure women 15-44 access to reproductive health care. We are currently experiencing more people uninsured, underinsured and with high deductibles. The Waiver gets health care to women with limited resources and assures families they can time and space children. The Waiver brings in Federal dollars which Wisconsin very much needs. The vote in the Senate will be Tuesday March 7th and the vote in the Assembly will be following quickly.

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