



COMMUNITY ADVOCATES
Where Meeting Basic Needs Inspires Hope

NOTE: David Riemer and Ludys Ebratt are both available for comment. To arrange an interview—or to schedule a visit to Community Advocates to speak with Core Plan enrollees—contact Jason Brame at (414) 475-6253, ext. 303.

NEWS RELEASE

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COMMUNITY ADVOCATES LAUNCHES ENROLLMENT OF FIRST WAVE OF BADGERCARE PLUS CORE PLAN APPLICANTS, MONDAY, JUNE 15

David Riemer: Historic Expansion Will Mean Better Health Outcomes, Lower Costs

Milwaukee (June 11, 2009)—Beginning Monday, June 15, Community Advocates will significantly expand its service as an enrollment site for men and women registering for the BadgerCare Plus Core Plan. **For the first time, adults with no dependant children below 200 percent of the poverty line—\$21,660 for single men and women, and \$29,139.96 for married couples, annually—will be eligible to receive health care benefits.** Benefits include basic health care services such as medical, preventive and hospital care, as well as generic drugs.

Community Advocates health care advocacy staff will assist registrants in enrolling online through the Access Web site of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (<https://access.wisconsin.gov/>) and over the phone (800-291-2002). Additionally, staff will help registrants complete their enrollment by submitting eligibility paperwork to state officials on their behalf, including birth certificates, picture IDs and pay stubs.

Because of expected high demand, Community Advocates is taking reservations to see a registration specialist. To make an appointment, call (414) 449-4777, ext. 147. Walk-in registrants will be seen on a first-come, first-served basis from 9 a.m.-noon Tuesdays-Fridays beginning June 16. Community Advocates is located at 4906 W. Fond du Lac Ave.

Advocates Commend State for Commitment to Expanding Health Care

Ludys Ebratt, Community Advocates Health Advocacy Manager, estimates at least 12,000 new applicants in Milwaukee County when registration begins June 15. Overall, more than 41,000 people are expected to register across the state during this historic expansion.

“By expanding the BadgerCare Plus Core Plan to the poorest of the poor, state health administrators are giving hope to men and women for whom high-level health care was simply not a realistic option,” said Ebratt.

David Riemer, Director of the Community Advocates Public Policy Institute and one of the original architects of BadgerCare, has long advocated for expansion of benefits to poor childless adults, the most chronically uninsured population in Wisconsin.

“In an era when so many states are scaling back their social programs, I commend Governor Jim Doyle, Department of Health Services Secretary Karen Timberlake and Department of Health Services Medicaid Director Jason Helgeson, and the Wisconsin Legislature for increasing their commitment to expanding health care to the poor,” said Riemer. “Making BadgerCare Plus available to childless adults will improve health outcomes and provide a better quality of life for thousands of men and women.”

Riemer expects expansion of BadgerCare Plus coverage to lower health care costs system-wide.

“Expanding insurance will mean increased access to preventive care and chronic care for this population, as well as fewer costly visits to emergency rooms, especially for the treatment of routine medical procedures,” said Riemer. “As a result, we can also expect a decrease in uncompensated costs incurred by hospitals that treat the uninsured, which would be otherwise passed along to Wisconsin’s taxpayers and employers as higher insurance costs.”

Expansion of the Core Plan comes 10 years nearly to the month after the original BadgerCare debuted in 1999. Riemer, as Director of Administration to former Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist, was instrumental in fashioning BadgerCare in 1997 as well as helping to obtain the federal waiver two years later. Riemer has long lobbied for use of Medicaid funds to help provide insurance for childless adults.

The Community Advocates Public Policy Institute (1430 Underwood Ave., Wauwatosa) has a clear and simple goal: To explain why so many Milwaukeeans are poor, and to develop and implement a practical strategy to greatly reduce the level of poverty in our community and offer the poor the tools they need to lead better lives.