
NORTH DAKOTA

Nicole Jorwic

From: Terri Cote [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 17, 2017 11:35 AM
To: Nicole Jorwic
Subject: Medicaid

My name is Teresa Cote. I reside in Valley City, North Dakota.

With the assistance of Medicaid, I receive medical services including clinic visits, medication and Diabetes lancets and strips. Without Medicaid, I would have to pay for my medication and other health related expenses out of my own pocket. For me would be disastrous. I would not have enough money left to support myself. The medication I take is very expensive and I would have to discontinue most of them.

Because of increased costs and decrease in providers to assist, I would lose my medical assistance and the cost of medications will increase.

Thank you for your time.

Terri Cote

[REDACTED] Valley City, ND [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Nicole Jorwic

From: Amy Thom [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 17, 2017 9:53 AM
To: Nicole Jorwic
Subject: Letter regarding Medicaid from ND



Amy Thom Letter to State Representatives Regarding Medicaid DD Waiver (2).docx

Amy (Widicker) Thom

Bismarck, ND

July 17, 2017

My name is Amy (Widicker) Thom. My husband, Johnny, and I are constituents of District 7. We are concerned about the proposed medical bill and how this will affect our daughters coverage as well as many other North Dakota families with special needs children. Our three year-old daughter, Emerie, is currently on the Traditional Self-Directed Supports Waiver (Medicaid DD Waiver).

My husband and I both grew up on farms here in North Dakota, where we learned the importance of hard work and faith. ~~We both graduated from college, and began our careers in the medical field. After we were married, we made the decision~~ to start a family, and God blessed us with a beautiful little girl in August of 2013. We were shocked and terrified when Emerie was born with a port-wine stain birthmark that covered her face. We were apprehensive for our daughter's future (and ours), as we began a frightening journey dealing with her rare condition. At two months of age, Emerie experienced her first set of seizures, and was given the diagnosis of Sturge-Weber Syndrome, a very rare neurological disorder characterized by abnormal blood vessel activity in the brain. Sturge-Weber can cause seizures, stroke-like episodes, paralysis, migraines, glaucoma, and developmental delays. Our family quickly learned that Emerie's diagnosis would require skillful management by a team of medical experts... including neurologists, dermatologists, ophthalmologists, physiatrists, and medical rehabilitation specialists. Because of its unpredictable nature, Sturge-Weber manifests itself differently in each individual. For our Emerie, Sturge-Weber Syndrome has meant seizures; repeated laser treatments on her birthmark; limited use of her right arm and leg; glaucoma; partial retinal detachment; hip dysplasia; and developmental delays.

This journey has taken us on countless in-state, as well as out-of-state medical appointments for eye exams and various eye procedures; laser treatments; and extended hospital stays in Bismarck and Minneapolis as Emerie's medical team has fought to control her life-threatening seizures. We are so very grateful for the Medicaid DD Waiver assistance Emerie has received which has helped her to have a good quality of life. She has wonderful therapists that see her 3-4 times a week. Our goal is for Emerie to walk and talk someday. Currently she is walking with the help of a little walker, and is saying a handful of words. She fills our home with laughter and a joy we could only have dreamed of. We are thrilled with her accomplishments and how far she has come, despite all the medical challenges she faces daily!

As a licensed Social Worker, my job was to help others get connected with the community support systems they needed; I never imagined that my own family would be in a position of needing the support of programs available in our state. However, life has a funny way of changing our plans and expectations; at the encouragement of a Social Worker from West Central Human Services Center, we signed our daughter up for the Early Intervention Services, which she qualified for under the Traditional Self-Directed Support Waiver. After she aged-out of the program at 3, she was determined eligible to stay on the waiver and continue to receive support. The biggest blessing from this waiver has been the medical assistance. It has acted as our supplementary insurance for Emerie, which has been a huge help to our family in covering the accumulated medical expenses. Emerie has spent a total of 8 weeks in the hospital since she was born. She has received therapy 3-4 times a week (one month of therapies alone, out-of-pocket, would cost us over \$3,000) and has needed various medical equipment. Medicaid has been a lifesaver with these expenses, and has kept my family from going bankrupt and losing our home. My family has also received the Respite Support offered through the waiver. This has been so wonderful, as we are unable to leave Emerie with a typical babysitter, and we have been able to train care providers that we can trust to care for her unique medical needs. Having respite care has helped us to avoid "burn out," which can be a very real issue for parents faced with the daily demands of a special needs child.

I can honestly share that this Traditional Self-Directed Support Waiver has helped us remain financially stable. It has helped provide the medical care Emerie needs on a daily basis. The waiver has also helped give my family peace of mind regarding our daughter's future.

I cannot adequately express what a blessing the Support Waiver has been for my family. I feel like our story is a perfect example of how the system has worked and should work. We are a hard-working, God-fearing, loving family, who have been able to give our amazing, special needs daughter every possible medical opportunity. We are able to do this daily

through the grace of God, and the support we receive through the Medicaid Waiver. Thank you so much for reading our story. Thank you, also, for the support you have given through this waiver to other North Dakota families.

I am including some pictures of our family. These photos do not show the heartbreaking times... when our daughter was in the hospital, on the ventilator fighting for her life; the polka-dot burn marks on her face that accompany the laser treatments; the hours of traveling to and from appointments; the days of uncertainty and exhaustion that accompany our daughter's life-threatening condition. Instead, I am sending you some of my favorite pictures... pictures of joy and hope... because I believe in our North Dakota leaders, and pray that you will take the time to consider how directly this legislation will affect our family and our daughter's future.

Most Sincerely,
Amy (Widicker) Thom



Nicole Jorwic

From: Kelsey Elgin [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, July 15, 2017 12:46 AM
To: Nicole Jorwic
Subject: RE: Medicaid Matters in North Dakota - Please Share with ND Senators.

I currently do not receive my health insurance through Medicaid. However, I stand with a majority of North Dakotans and a majority of Americans when I ask you to reject the "health care" proposal ironically titled the Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA).

The BCRA fundamentally alters the Medicaid program - not just the Medicaid Expansion implemented with the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) - and those changes would have a profoundly negative affect on the health of North Dakotans.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provide health and long-term care coverage to "more than 93,000 low-income children, pregnant women, adults, seniors, and people with disabilities in North Dakota" as well as "a major source of funding for safety-net hospitals and nursing homes" (Source: <http://files.kff.org/attachment/fact-sheet-medicaid-state-ND>).

This bill also endangers protections for people with pre-existing conditions by allowing insurers to request a waiver to change which Essential Health Benefits can be offered in a plan - and by allowing annual and/or lifetime limits for those benefits, as well as do away with caps on annual out-of-pocket costs for patients.

Just from a surface analysis, this bill sounds horrible for the people who truly need affordable access to health care: the people who would use it the most.

I support the Medicaid program because it allows citizens across our state to receive much needed health care. The people who receive Medicaid are valuable, productive members of our communities. I abhor the thought that we would even consider taking health care away from North Dakotans.

I stand with the North Dakota Medical Association, North Dakota Hospital Association in their opposition of this piece of legislation and I encourage you to do the same.

Thanks

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-- Kelsey Elgin --

"It is what you read when you don't have to that determines what you will be when you can't help it."

—Oscar Wilde