

# Institute for Reforming Government: Wisconsin's state-based alternative on Medicaid reform: What other states can learn

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**Madison, Wis.** — The Institute for Reforming Government issued a policy paper today regarding Wisconsin's state-based reforms that covered everyone living in poverty under Medicaid without taking the temporary financial incentives for Medicaid expansion under Obamacare. Enacted by Governor Walker and the Wisconsin State Legislature, these reforms are an example for states around the country as they debate Medicaid expansion.

"The state-based reforms enacted under the leadership of Governor Walker and the legislature continue to provide health care coverage without depending on the federal government to expand Medicaid that could leave taxpayers at risk. Wisconsin chose innovative reforms to cover everyone living in poverty under Medicaid rather than risk the potential for fleeting incentives that would leave taxpayers vulnerable to future costs. As other states continue to debate Washington's costly Medicaid expansion, Wisconsin offers a beacon of hope in the form of bold state-based reform," said Rob McDonald, Chairman of the Board for the Institute for Reforming Government.

## **Highlights of Governor Walker's Medicaid Reforms:**

Wisconsin's 1115 Demonstration Waiver allowed for "Wisconsin to provide the

Medicaid standard benefit plan to adults without dependent children and who have household incomes up to 100 percent of the federal poverty level.”[\[1\]](#) This was Wisconsin’s alternative to accepting the financial incentives of Medicaid expansion under ObamaCare, which could have set Wisconsin up for future costs as the federal government backed away from its commitments and Wisconsin was left with the bill. Details of Wisconsin’s approved BadgerCare Reform Demonstration Waiver Amendment approved in October of 2018 include:[\[2\]](#)

- The program included the opportunity to reduce a member’s premium by supporting healthy choices.
- If a member chooses to go to the emergency room for non-emergency uses, then they might be charged a copayment.
- “For those childless adults between the ages of 19 and 49 who do not meet an exemption, eligibility for benefits is limited to 48 months.”
- A requirement for members “to submit a health risk assessment which provides information on their health and wellness, including any drug use.”

The Medicaid Policy Paper can be found [here](#).

The Institute for Reforming Government is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that seeks to simplify government at every level by offering policy solutions to thought leaders in American government in the areas of tax reform, government inefficiency, and burdensome regulations.

Learn more about the Institute for Reforming Government [here](#).

[\[1\] https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/badgercareplus/clawaiver-finalapp.pdf](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/badgercareplus/clawaiver-finalapp.pdf)

[\[2\] https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIDHS/bulletins/2050098](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIDHS/bulletins/2050098)