

GWAAR: Aging advocates support the Governor's veto of medicaid bills that would make it more difficult to keep critical health care coverage

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The Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. (GWAAR) supports Governor Evers' action today, vetoing two bills that would make it harder for low-income older adults, family caregivers, and others to obtain and keep critical health care coverage.

AB 934/SB 905 required Medicaid enrollees to reapply for program eligibility every six months instead of annually, doubling the amount of required paperwork. Further complicating the eligibility renewal process, this legislation prohibited the Department of Health Services from using prepopulated forms or otherwise supplying information, other than name and address, to program participants or applicants, even if the Department has the information. These changes create increased opportunities for missed deadlines which could result in disenrollment and reporting errors which could result in a loss of health care coverage for six months. AB 936/SB 912 added new work rules to the program. Compliance with these new rules (requirements to take additional work hours or promotions) would be exceedingly difficult for some workers with acute/chronic health conditions or caregiving responsibilities; yet failing to comply would make them ineligible for benefits for six months.

“Older adults and family caregivers already face significant challenges in obtaining needed health care services, so creating additional barriers to health care coverage would only further exacerbate these challenges,” said Robert Kellerman, Executive Director of GWAAR, “We must do all we can to improve access to preventative and early intervention care which improves health outcomes and saves money.”