

AIDS Foundation OF CHICAGO

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Support Medicaid Coverage for People Living With HIV

To extend the lives of people living with HIV, the State of Illinois should petition the federal government to extend Medicaid coverage to HIV-positive people *before* they become disabled by HIV/AIDS.

Current Medicaid rules prevent many HIV+ Illinoisans from accessing medical care:

- **Medicaid Is Set Up to Cover End-Stage AIDS Care, NOT Preventative HIV Care.** Medicaid provides medical care for low-income people who have HIV/AIDS and are deemed to be totally disabled, but current regulations prevent many Illinoisans from accessing Medicaid coverage when they are diagnosed with HIV. Instead, the current rules say: “come back for a Medicaid care after you get a lot sicker.”
- **People Need Medical Care EARLY to Extend Their Lives and Well-Being.** People with HIV need quality medical care to help PREVENT and DELAY the onset of disabling and expensive medical crises. Getting people with HIV into care as soon as they are diagnosed with HIV keeps people healthy, keeps people working, and keeps people out of (very expensive) emergency rooms.
- **Medicaid Rules CAN Be Changed—to Benefit Everyone.** The State of Illinois can apply for a waiver from the federal government that would modify current regulations. In addition, members of Congress can and should support the **Early Treatment for HIV Act** to give states the option to provide Medicaid to non-disabled people with HIV.

Medicaid is Important Because It Is a Reliable Source of Funding for HIV/AIDS Care:

- **Medicaid is currently the LARGEST SINGLE payment source for HIV/AIDS care in the United States.**
- **As an entitlement program, Medicaid spending in Illinois triggers federal dollars to match all state money spent on Medicaid,** and Medicaid funding is not subject to the annual appropriations fluctuations that affect other public health programs.
- **Unlike the CARE Act and other programs, Medicaid provides recipients coverage for a full array of medical services—including prescription drugs and in-patient care—and is not limited to just medical needs related to HIV/AIDS.** With Medicaid, a person can receive coverage for virtually all their healthcare needs.

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