

# Sensible *Medicaid*

AIDS Foundation  
OF CHICAGO

At the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, health care providers could do little for people with HIV/AIDS, until they were dying and in need of palliative care. Since then, much has been learned about HIV, and getting people into care as early in their disease progression as possible is now a public health priority. Sadly, Medicaid regulations have not kept pace with these developments, and current rules prevent many low-income Illinoisans from accessing the care that could help them stay healthy and working, and prevent costly and disabling health crises.

## I Support Expanding Medicaid to cover HIV

Limiting access to Medicaid coverage to low-income people whose HIV has already made them totally disabled does not benefit Medicaid or people living with HIV/AIDS. Consider the following:

- Without access to quality primary care and supportive services, people with HIV are at increased risk for debilitating health crises that require treatment in hospitals and emergency rooms.
- Paying for care in hospitals and emergency rooms is more costly than paying for quality primary care and support services that keep people with HIV healthy.
- Limiting Medicaid to those already disabled by AIDS only increases the human costs to people with HIV, and the financial costs to the Medicaid program.
- Providing Medicaid coverage to low-income people with HIV would result in **cost-savings** to Medicaid, would benefit everyone by **keeping people healthy and in the workforce**, and would allow CARE Act programs to reach more people with HIV who need, but aren't yet getting, primary medical care and critical support services.

**Fortunately**, the Illinois Department of Public Aid is investigating how to improve Illinois' Medicaid program by covering low-income people with HIV. The time is now for Illinoisans who are living with, affected by, or who otherwise have expertise in HIV/AIDS care, to work together and help ensure that Illinois develops a sound plan for expanding HIV/AIDS health care for low-income people in Illinois.

**I support expanding Medicaid to cover people with HIV**—before they are totally disabled. Medicaid coverage of HIV is good public health policy.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email, phone and fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark X here: \_\_\_\_\_ if you are authorized to, and are enlisting your organization in support of this campaign.

Please fax completed petitions to the AIDS Foundation of Chicago at (312) 922-2916.

For information on how to get involved in ensuring that Medicaid covers people with HIV before they are totally disabled by AIDS, contact Grisel Robles at [grobles@aidschicago.org](mailto:grobles@aidschicago.org) or call (312) 922-2322.

Petitions collected by the AIDS Foundation of Chicago will only be used to generate contact lists for the Sensible Medicaid Campaign, and to document support for the concept of expanding Medicaid to low-income people with HIV.