



policy brief

FAMILIES AT RISK:

KEY FINDINGS

The Connecticut Health Foundation (CHF) and the Anthem Foundation of Connecticut, Inc., commissioned a series of four policy briefs to explore the consequences of changes to the state's Medicaid system included in the state budget for fiscal years 2004 and 2005. The policy briefs were authored by Joan Alker of the Georgetown Health Policy Institute and Judith Solomon and Mary Alice Lee of Connecticut Voices for Children.

THE IMPACT OF CO-PAYMENTS AND REDUCED BENEFITS ON CHILDREN ENROLLED IN HUSKY A (November 2003)

- Enrollment in HUSKY A can be expected to decline by 86,744 adults and children. Of these persons who can be expected to lose coverage, 59,638 or approximately 69 percent would be children; the remaining 27,106 would be parents or pregnant women.
- Just under half of those who can be expected to lose coverage would be children and parents whose income falls below the poverty level – 26,212 children and 15,070 adults – with monthly incomes ranging from \$604 to \$1,196 a month.

IMPOSING PREMIUMS ON LOW-INCOME ELDERLY AND DISABLED PERSONS IN MEDICAID (December 2003)

- Nearly 25 percent or 7,330 elderly and disabled persons can be expected to lose Medicaid coverage if premiums are implemented as the Department of Social Services (DSS) has announced. Premiums imposed will range from \$11 to \$14 a month and will affect persons whose incomes already fall below the poverty line.
- The elderly and persons with disabilities with the lowest incomes and the least ability to pay will be the most severely affected by these proposals.

THE IMPACT OF CO-PAYMENTS AND REDUCED BENEFITS ON CHILDREN ENROLLED IN HUSKY A (January 2004)

- Connecticut will become the first and only state to abolish federal minimum standards for children's health care services and the first state to charge co-payments for all children in its Medicaid program.
- If co-payments are charged, children's visits to health care providers can be expected to decline by as much as 30 percent.
- The health of 30,000 to 40,000 children with special health care needs will be at risk if Connecticut eliminates Medicaid's guarantee of necessary health care services for children and charges co-payments for their care.

COST OF PROPOSED MEDICAID AND HUSKY A CHANGES TO THE CONNECTICUT ECONOMY (March 2004)

- Connecticut can expect to lose over \$96 million in federal funding if changes to Connecticut's Medicaid program are implemented as planned in the state's budget. Among other economic effects, this reduction in federal funding can be expected to cause a loss of just under 1,800 jobs.
- The number of uninsured children in Connecticut can be expected to rise by 43 percent if premiums are implemented as planned.
- This sharp increase in the number of uninsured children and adults can be expected to result in over \$93 million in annualized costs being shifted to providers, to other areas of the federal and state budgets, and to low-income persons themselves.

THE IMPACT OF PREMIUMS ON PREGNANT WOMEN IN MEDICAID (March 2004 Insert)

- At least 2,000 low-income pregnant women can be expected to lose Medicaid coverage if premiums are imposed.
- These uninsured pregnant women will have difficulty obtaining early prenatal care and essential care and family planning services after giving birth; their babies will not automatically be covered for timely well-baby care and immunizations.