

04.26.25 POLICY PROPOSAL 6

Title: Expanding Access to Care Through Medicaid

Full Name*

Henry Griffin Cupstid, MD

Designation*

Physician

Are you submitting on behalf of a county medical society, specialty society, or other member?*

Yes

If YES, please indicate the name of the county medical society, specialty society, or other member(s) for which you represent.

(If NO, you may skip.)

South Carolina Academy of Family Physicians

Submission / Idea*

While the SCMA has identified "Expanding Access to Care" as an advocacy priority, it has not endorsed Medicaid as the most effective means for achieving this goal. With devastating budget cuts looming, the SCMA should emphatically communicate its support for the Medicaid program to policymakers and the public.

Evidence / Support for Proposal*

(1) Medicaid is a lifeline for more than 1.1 million low-income adults, children, pregnant women, elderly adults, and individuals with disabilities in South Carolina. (2) Research consistently shows that Medicaid coverage improves health outcomes for individuals, families, and communities and is associated with reduced mortality for children and adults. (3) A recent Kaiser Family Foundation poll indicates that over half of adults report having Medicaid coverage for themselves or a family member. Additionally, a significant majority view Medicaid positively, regardless of party affiliation. (4) South Carolina is one of 10 states that has not accepted Medicaid expansion funds and has a larger uninsured population than the national average. (5) Proposed reductions in Medicaid funding will exacerbate existing healthcare disparities and threaten the financial survival of rural hospitals and physician practices.

Requested Action: What action is required to achieve this idea?

*(i.e. Enact legislation, have a state agency review an issue, enact an SCMA policy statement on a topic, or other action?)**

The SCMA will make “Expanding Access to Care Through Medicaid” a top advocacy priority. The SCMA will oppose federal and state efforts to reduce Medicaid funding or restrict eligibility. The SCMA will acknowledge its support for Medicaid to the Governor, members of the Legislature, relevant state agencies, the news media, and other appropriate organizations.

Why is the Requested Action important?*

The South Carolina Medical Association's mission is to "improve the health of all South Carolinians." Expanding access to quality, affordable healthcare through the Medicaid program is essential to achieving this aim.

If there are additional details not addressed above that you would like to share, please provide them here.

(If you feel that the above information is sufficient, you may skip.)

References:

American Hospital Association, "House Passes Budget Resolution Potentially Impacting Medicaid," AHA, February 26, 2025, <https://www.aha.org/news/headline/2025-02-26-house-passes-budget-resolution-potentially-impacting-medicaid>.

Kaiser Family Foundation, "7 Charts About Public Opinion on Medicaid," KFF, March 7, 2025, <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/poll-finding/7-charts-about-public-opinion-on-medicaid/>.

American Medical Association, "Research Summary: Benefits of Medicaid Expansion," October 2020, <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2020-10/research-summary-benefits-of-medicaid-expansion.pdf>.

Farrell, T. (2024). Health Outcomes Associated with Medicaid Expansion: A Companion to Health Outcomes Associated with Medicaid Expansion in Adults Reaching Retirement Age. South Carolina Institute of Medicine & Public Health, <https://imph.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/IMPH-Medicaid-Expansion-2024.pdf>.

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, “South Carolina State Health Assessment,” December 2023, 2024.

<https://dph.sc.gov/sites/scdph/files/media/document/New%20PDFs/SHA-Report-20240521.pdf>