



Bridging the gap between research and policy

SHADAC Newsletter - February 22, 2010

Announcements

SHARE Webinar

The State Health Access Reform Evaluation program (SHARE), housed at SHADAC, will host a webinar on February 24, 2010 from 12:00-1:00 EST. The webinar topic is "Using Income Tax Information to Target Medicaid and CHIP Outreach." Please join us for a discussion of the Maryland and Iowa initiatives, including the first available findings on the implementation and impact of this initiative in Maryland. The webinar is free and open to the public, but registration is required.

[Register for the SHARE Webinar](#)

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Julie Sonier Joins SHADAC Staff

We would like to welcome our new Deputy Director of SHADAC, Julie Sonier. Julie joins us from the Minnesota Department of Health, where she served as director of the Health Economics Program. She has 12 years of experience collecting and analyzing data related to health care access, cost, and quality to inform state-level health care reform efforts. Julie holds a masters degree in public affairs from Princeton University and prior to her work in Minnesota was a federal budget and policy analyst in Washington, D.C. We are excited to have Julie join the SHADAC team.

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Publications

GAMC Article in *Minnesota Physician*

Lynn Blewett published the article, "Complexities of Health

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Care for the Very Poor: Eliminating GAMC isn't a Solution," in the December 2009 issue of *Minnesota Physician*. The article discusses the potential impact of eliminating Minnesota's General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) program, which provides health care assistance to the state's low-income adults not otherwise eligible for the state's public programs.

[View Lynn Blewett's GAMC article](#)

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Journal of Labor Research Article

Lynn Blewett, Peter Graven, Jeanette Ziegenfuss and Michael Davern have published the article, "Trends in Employee Wage and Health Insurance Compensation for Employer-Sponsored Health Insurance (ESI) Coverage," in the December 2009 edition of the *Journal of Labor Research*. This study examined state-level trends in both employer and employee contributions to the costs of health insurance premiums between 2002 and 2005 and assessed these contributions relative to changes in worker wages.

[View the Journal of Labor Research article](#)

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Presentations

United Way Leadership Forum

Dr. Lynn Blewett presented on the proposed Medicaid expansions under federal reform and the potential impact of auto-converting GAMC enrollees into MinnesotaCare. This was part of the United Way Leadership Forum: The New Faces of the Uninsured event held December 2, 2009 in Minneapolis, MN.

[View Lynn Blewett's United Way Leadership Forum Presentation](#)

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Overview of Health Reform

Elizabeth Lukanen presented an overview of health reform to the regional managers of REM Minnesota, an organization that provides service options for people with mental retardation and developmental disabilities. This presentation discussed the key players in the reform debate, summarized the content of the reforms and areas of disagreement, outlined the policy

process, and addressed the potential impact to providers, Medicaid recipients and dual eligibles.

[View Elizabeth Lukanen's Presentation, "Overview of Federal Health Care Reform"](#)

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News from the States

Minnesota Uninsurance Rate Increases

The Minnesota Department of Health released its health insurance coverage estimates for 2009, showing that 9.1% of the state's population does not have health insurance. This reflects a significant increase in the 2007 uninsurance estimate of 7.2%, or about 100,000 more uninsured. The increase was due primarily to a decline in employer-sponsored coverage. This project was done in collaboration with SHADAC researchers led by principal investigator Kathleen Call.

[View a fact sheet of early results from the MN Health Access Survey](#)

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Virgin Islands Health Insurance Estimates Released

Results from the 2009 Virgin Islands Health Insurance Survey show a dramatic increase in uninsurance, at 28.7% in 2009 compared to 24.1% in 2003. Much of the increase is attributed to a decline in employer-sponsored coverage. This project was done in collaboration with SHADAC researchers led by principal investigator Kathleen Call.

[View a fact sheet of early results from the VI Health Insurance Survey](#)

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SCI Reports Released

State Coverage Initiatives (SCI) has released "2010 State of the States: The State We're In." This report documents the efforts states have made in implementing local reforms in 2009, an especially challenging year with the recession, tight budgets, and uncertain impact of federal reform.

[View SCI's State of the States Report](#)

SCI has also released "Preparing for Health Reform: The Role of the Health Insurance Exchange." This Issue Brief provides an overview of the potential role of a health insurance exchange, state-specific issues that should be considered before establishing an exchange, and the different ways in which an exchange might be structured and operated.

[View SCI's "Preparing for Health Reform" Brief](#)

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County Health Rankings Available

County-level health rankings were released on February 17, 2010 at www.countyhealthrankings.org. This first-of-its-kind collection of 50 reports - one per state - helps community leaders see that the health of a community depends on many different factors - ranging from individual health behaviors, education and jobs, to quality of health care, to the environment. Summary rankings are provided for health outcomes and four different types of health factors: health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is collaborating with the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute to develop these rankings for each state's counties.

[View County-Level Health Rankings](#)

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