

## The Facts about Medicaid under the BCRA

**Charge:** The legislation would hurt senior citizens.

**Response:** The Better Care Act makes NO CHANGES to Medicare, which is the primary source of health coverage for Americans 65 and older. While many older Americans receive long term care through Medicaid, states will continue to prioritize their health care needs as their Medicaid population changes. This includes budgeting for adequate care of seniors covered by Medicaid in those states. Let's not forget what Obamacare meant for seniors who rely on Medicaid. Obamacare unfairly provided a higher share of federal funding for abled-bodied adults than for the vulnerable Americans that Medicaid was created to serve – the aged, disabled, and children. The Better Care Act ends that.

**Charge:** Senate GOP's proposed Medicaid cuts would slash aid for special needs kids.

**Response:** Federal Medicaid spending continues to grow under the Better Care Act reaching \$466 billion in 2026, a 26 percent increase over what it is today, while adhering to a budget for the first time in the program's history.\*

The Better Care Act recognizes the unique challenges facing special needs children, which is why the legislation creates a special exemption for disabled children from the per capita caps.

The Better Care Act also ends Obamacare's unfair preference for coverage for abled-bodied adults by providing a higher share of federal funding of abled-bodied adults than for the vulnerable Americans that Medicaid was created to serve – the aged, disabled, and children.

**Charge:** The bill's Medicaid cuts would hurt nursing homes since Medicaid pays for about two-thirds of the 1.4 million elderly people in nursing homes.

**Response:** The Better Care Act makes NO CHANGES to Medicare, which is the primary source of health coverage for Americans 65 and older. While many older Americans receive long term care through Medicaid, states will continue to prioritize their health care needs as their Medicaid population changes. This includes budgeting for adequate care of seniors covered by Medicaid in those states. Let's not forget what Obamacare meant for seniors who rely on Medicaid. Obamacare unfairly provided a higher share of federal funding for abled-bodied adults than for the vulnerable Americans that Medicaid was created to serve – the aged, disabled, and children. The Better Care Act ends that.

**Charge:** Repealing Obamacare would hurt disabled veterans who rely on Medicaid.

**Response:** The Better Care Act makes absolutely NO CHANGES to veterans' programs. None. To the extent there are veterans relying on Medicaid as a safety net program, we should be working through our veterans' programs to help them get the training and services they need. In fact, a Republican Congress has already acted to reform the VA to address dangerous wait times that put veterans' health at risk.

**Charge:** **The Medicaid cuts would hurt drug, mental-health programs.**

**Response:** The legislation includes a number of improvements specifically targeting mental health and substance abuse. For the first time, a provision, called the IMD exclusion, that prohibits states from using Medicaid to help finance mental health and substance abuse treatment would be lifted. This is in addition to the \$45 billion in dedicated funding in the legislation that will be used directly to combat the opioid crisis.

Furthermore, under the legislation Medicaid spending continues to grow – it will be \$466 billion in 2026, a 26 percent increase over what it is today. The legislation also creates new tax credits for low-income Americans, includes hundreds of billions of dollars in state innovation funds, and has stability funds to stabilize and rebuild a state’s failing insurance market.\*

**Charge:** **The Medicaid cuts would hurt job creation and even cause job losses.**

**Response:** If expanding Medicaid and government programs was the key to economic growth, then economic growth under President Obama would have been through the roof. The reality is that federal Medicaid spending doubled over the last decade, according to CMS, and total expenditures will nearly double again in the next decade. This is simply not sustainable.

Rather than trapping people in a safety net program where every dollar they earn threatens to cost them their Medicaid benefits, the Better Care Act seeks to move low-income Americans off Medicaid and on to private health insurance, where hopefully they can build a more prosperous life for themselves.

**Charge:** **The legislation would hurt pregnant women trying to access maternal and pre-natal healthcare; elderly women who make up two-thirds of all Medicaid recipients; and young women trying to access reproductive healthcare.**

**Response:** The Better Care Act makes no changes to Obamacare’s insurance benefit requirements, but to the extent states have flexibility in designing benefit packages, it is the exact same flexibility that exists in current law. Furthermore, Republicans have increased resources for community health centers where millions of women nationwide go for health care including maternity care and reproductive health services.

*\* Based on CBO score of the original BCRA discussion draft.*