

MISSOURI HEALTH POLICY PRIORITIES

The REACH Healthcare Foundation was established in 2003 with a mandate to increase access to health care coverage and services to improve the health of uninsured and medically underserved individuals in our service area. To accomplish this, we believe it is essential to advocate for a strong health and human service safety net system and public policies that support individual and community health.

IMPLEMENT STATE-BASED APPROACH TO HEALTH COVERAGE

The REACH Foundation supports development of a state solution to provide health care coverage for low-income children and adults under the Medicaid program so that uninsured and medically underserved Missourians can secure the health care they need.

Nearly 300,000 Missourians are unable to secure health care coverage because restrictive state Medicaid eligibility rules put them into an insurance coverage gap – without coverage options and unable to qualify for subsidies through the health insurance marketplace. Insurance coverage allows people to obtain the care they need, improving health and reducing costs to families, communities and the state. Several states have developed alternative solutions to help their residents in the coverage gap. We urge our lawmakers to do the same for Missouri's citizens.

INVEST IN THE ORAL HEALTH OF MISSOURIANS

The REACH Foundation urges lawmakers to secure permanent funding for adult dental benefits under Missouri HealthNet as a top health priority with significant health, workforce productivity and cost benefits to residents and the state.

Nearly 10 years ago, Missouri eliminated dental benefits for most adults, limiting those Medicaid benefits primarily to children and adults who are pregnant, blind or in nursing homes. As a result, many adults with oral health infections and other problems use hospital emergency rooms for care. The Legislature approved restoration of adult dental benefits through a tax amnesty bill that requires annual renewal, creating uncertainty among dental providers and their patients.

ADOPT A BALANCED FISCAL APPROACH

The REACH Foundation encourages state government leaders to enact sound tax and budget policies that preserve core services and ensure the availability of a dependable safety net system that provides critical assistance for families in need.

The state raises and spends tax revenue in ways that profoundly affect the well-being of families and communities. As Missouri continues its recovery from the Recession, it is important to preserve services and a safety net system to help families gain stability and participate in the economy even during times of need.