



Implementing the Affordable Care Act is Critical for Washingtonians Age 50-64



Why are 167,000 Washingtonians age 50-64 uninsured?

- * They are no longer attached to an employer based health plan because they retired early or lost their job.
- * They are homemakers, caregivers, work for a small business or are phasing down employment.
- * They can't afford to purchase insurance on the individual market. Many older adults face higher rates due to age rating. Insurance companies can legally charge older people three times as much as younger people for the same policy.

People age 50-64 who are uninsured and thousands more who are underinsured stand to benefit greatly from the Affordable Care Act.

How will implementing the Affordable Care Act help?

40,000 Washingtonians age 50-64 will be eligible for the Medicaid Expansion.

Washington State has the opportunity to expand Medicaid to include individuals between the ages of 19-65 with incomes up to approximately \$15,000 per year. The federal government will cover 100 percent of the cost of covering these individuals through 2016 and 90 percent thereafter. Expanding Medicaid means helping 40,000 very low-income older adults get the health care they deserve.

90,000 Older Adults will be eligible for subsidies through the Healthplanfinder.

Older adults who are struggling to find individual health insurance plans will benefit from the newly established Healthplanfinder, our state's health insurance exchange. Starting in 2014, people will be able to use Healthplanfinder to more easily shop for and compare plans. Individuals with incomes up to \$45,000 per year will be eligible for federal subsidies and tax credits on a sliding scale. This will help an estimated 90,000 Washingtonians age 50-64 find and afford the coverage they need.

Washington State Lawmakers Need to Act Now

To be ready to enroll people for coverage beginning in 2014, state lawmakers need to act now. Doing so is the right thing to do and it makes good fiscal sense. Designing the Healthplanfinder so that it is consumer friendly and easy to use will help up to 477,000 people find insurance. Expanding Medicaid will produce an estimated state savings of approximately \$200 million over the biennium. These changes are critical for Washingtonians of all ages, especially those who are age 50-64.



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Data on uninsured age 50-64 by income level is from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner. Fiscal savings estimate from the Office of Financial Management.