

# New Barriers to Care: Medicaid Premiums and ER Penalties

Utah's latest Medicaid expansion waiver, the "Fallback Plan" would add new out of pocket costs to Medicaid enrollees in the 100-138% expansion population.

The proposal includes monthly premiums (\$20 per month for individuals and \$30 for a couple), as well as an increase in the penalty for non-emergent ER usage from \$8 to \$25.

While this increase in cost still leaves the out of pocket burden below marketplace options, it is a step back from the accessibility and affordability of Medicaid as it exists today.



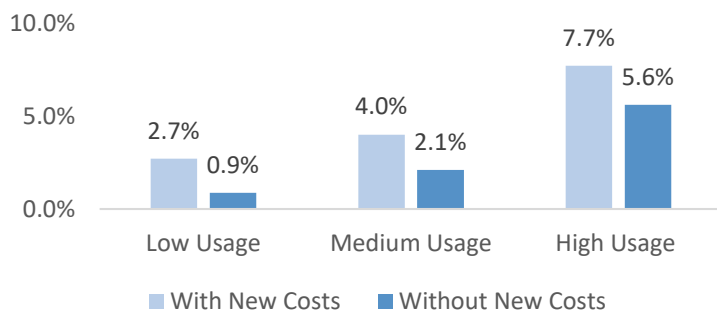
**This new cost sharing burden will act as a barrier to care.**

For people in this income category (between \$1,012 and \$1,396 per month for an individual) even \$20 per month can be prohibitive when faced with other expenses, like high housing, food, and transportation costs.

Even the process of premium payment can be a red tape barrier, adding one more step to maintaining access to care.

This hurdle can be seen in action on the CHIP program, where the number one reason kids lose their health care is a missed premium.

Expected Medicaid Out of Pocket Cost  
With and Without Additional Cost-Sharing



These changes will also increase the cost burden on Medicaid enrollees. For low usage, out of pocket costs would triple with the addition of the premiums, while nearly doubling for medium usage.

For high usage enrollees, the out of pocket cost burden could rise to almost 8% of their pre-tax income.

Expanding Medicaid to people between 100-138% FPL is a crucial way to expand real access to health care for some of the most underserved Utahns. Adding more cost-sharing is an unnecessary step backward.

**Utah is expanding coverage with one hand, while adding more financial and administrative burdens with the other**

