



Idahoans shared their stories with state and local leaders this year to help them understand the devastating impacts of cuts to services for those who access Medicaid services.



• Special online issue - Fall, 2011 •

THE MESSAGE IS LOUD AND CLEAR: MEDICAID MATTERS!

Idahoans tell legislators “Medicaid **MUST** be supported now and in the future”

As people gathered in the back of the House Health & Welfare Committee on Tuesday, March 14, Chairman McGeachin looked at the visitors who came to hear the vote on the newly printed House Bill 260. She asked if any in the audience would like an opportunity to say something before they voted. Kimi Maas nodded her head. The young woman stood up slowly, looked at each committee member, voiced an emotional, heartfelt “Thank you” and sat down quietly.

What happened in this committee was so very different from the message delivered

to Idahoans in Governor Otter’s State of the State speech in early January. The Governor called for another year of severe cuts in the Medicaid budget, eluded to programs being eliminated and referenced that Idahoans must rid ourselves of the “tyranny of entitlements.”

The problem was clear: The fact that the elimination of Medicaid-funded home and community services was being considered exposed a major knowledge gap.

Legislators, the Governor and many of the people who work with them appeared to have very little knowledge of how Idaho’s Medicaid program came into being, how it is now an integral part of the fabric of every community, how it has helped thousands of people move from dependence and institutionalization to freedom, independence and how it has created thousands of jobs.

Shortly after the Governor’s speech, advocacy groups, service providers, families and community members created a coalition called “Medicaid Matters.” Its purpose: to educate Idaho’s decision-makers and protect Medicaid services for individuals with developmental disabilities and mental illness.

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On Feb. 19th, 2011, over 5,000 attended rallies in 17 cities throughout Idaho.

Here in Boise, approx. 1,200 lined the Stateshouse steps chanting “Medicaid Matters!”



Updates and Information will be provided online:

Join Our Mailing List
Email: <input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Go"/>

Click on “Join Our Mailing List” and you’ll begin receiving updates and correspondence via your email address.

Please Sign Up Today!

www.MedicaidMattersinIdaho.com

In this Issue

The Message is Clear: Medicaid Matters!

People were empowered with a strong voice to protect vital supports from devastating cuts.

What happens now?

**PAGES 2-5:
The Next Steps**

Taking the next steps to protect and restore Medicaid funding for services.

And the People Rallied
Medicaid Matters rallies were held in 17 locations throughout Idaho. Over 5,000 people attended.

Statewide Tally

A Timeline of Events and Responses: Legislature 2011

**PAGES 6-8:
The Cuts We Prevented**

Looking Back 20 Years

Your Regional Contacts

Please contact a coordinator in your area and ask how you can help!

Keeping Lawmakers and Community Members in the Loop

We must continue efforts to inform and educate our lawmakers by meeting with them, writing letters, or hosting them in our homes.

Tell Us About It...

Tracking how recent changes have impacted individuals, families and the community is vital. We also need to know how your legislators and business/community leaders are responding to our message. We need to hear from you!

SAVE THE DATE!
Disability Advocacy Day at the State Capitol
JANUARY 26, 2012
more info online in December!

THE MESSAGE IS LOUD AND CLEAR: MEDICAID MATTERS!

(cont'd from page 1)



This newly formed group immediately went to work. Hundreds testified, wrote letters, phoned and posted video messages online. All were telling their personal stories of why Medicaid matters in so many ways to so many people. Over seventeen thousand participated in a petition drive to support a tax increase to maintain community services. Over five thousand attended rallies: listening; cheering; holding up signs and celebrating their community and all those who belong in it. With every rally, every TV interview, every public testimony, the

message was strong and clear: Medicaid Matters!

We avoided a train wreck but we still have a long way to go to ensure the lives of Idahoans with developmental disabilities and mental illness are on track and moving forward. We cannot afford to just rise up during a legislative session and try to stop the most devastating cuts, we must advocate year-round for a healthy and effective Medicaid system for home and community-based services. Given our interaction with current Idaho legislators, it is clear that most of them need to understand the value of Medicaid's home and community-based services and the need to restore and expand them in Idaho. Without this general knowledge, they can easily return to new and equally disastrous cuts next session.

What are the next steps? Please take the time to read "The Next Steps" listed in this newsletter. It outlines necessary tasks we can all do to help keep this issue on everyone's mind. Keep talking; keep listening; keep making a difference!



The Next Steps*:

The foundation we laid during the 2011 legislative session to protect Medicaid services put us in a solid position to engage in a variety of activities to continue educating legislators and community leaders about developmental disabilities, mental illnesses and the role that Medicaid plays.

- **Invest in the Medicaid Matters in Idaho campaign.**
- **Speak to Legislators and Community Organizations**
Set up face-to-face meetings with legislators

Set up face-to-face meetings with community leaders
- **Host a Local Training**
- **Writing Letters is Always Valuable**
Write letters to your legislators

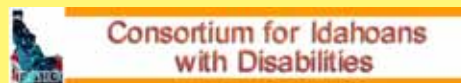
Write letters-to-the-editor
- **Invite Others to Become Involved**
- **Put up a "Medicaid Matters in Idaho" Yard sign**

**Specific information on "Next Steps" is listed on page 7*

MEDICAID MATTERS IN IDAHO



Infrastructure staffed and coordinated through members of the Consortium of Idahoans with Disabilities (CID)



Join our online community!



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www.MedicaidMattersinIdaho.com

AND THE PEOPLE RALLIED: February 19th, 2011

17 Locations Throughout Idaho. Over 5,000 people attending, 4850 Yard Signs Distributed.



Sandpoint Rally - 100



Idaho Falls Rally - 500+



Bonnars Ferry Rally - 100



Coeur d'Alene Rally - 250



Rexburg Rally - 150



Pocatello Rally - 500+



Lewiston Rally - 150



Salmon Rally - 100



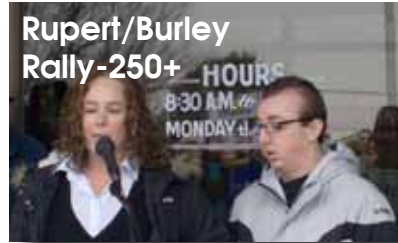
*MORE PHOTOS ON
NEXT PAGE
for gallery of photos and videos,
check out our website: [www.
MedicaidMattersInIdaho.com](http://www.MedicaidMattersInIdaho.com)*

AND THE PEOPLE RALLIED: February 19th, 2011

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Moscow Rally - 250



Rupert/Burley Rally - 250+



Emmett Rally - 200



Nampa Rally - 400



Payette Rally - 200



CHECK OUT OUR GALLERY ONLINE

To view our gallery of photos and videos,
check out our website:

www.MedicaidMattersInIdaho.com



Medicaid Matters Rally
Mountain Home, ID - 150



Boise Rally - 1,200



2011 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY:

Statewide Tally of those who participated in our state's legislative process:

1,400 Supporters attended or testified at Public Hearings on Medicaid

4,850 Yard Signs Distributed throughout Idaho

THOUSANDS of phone calls, letters and emails made to legislators

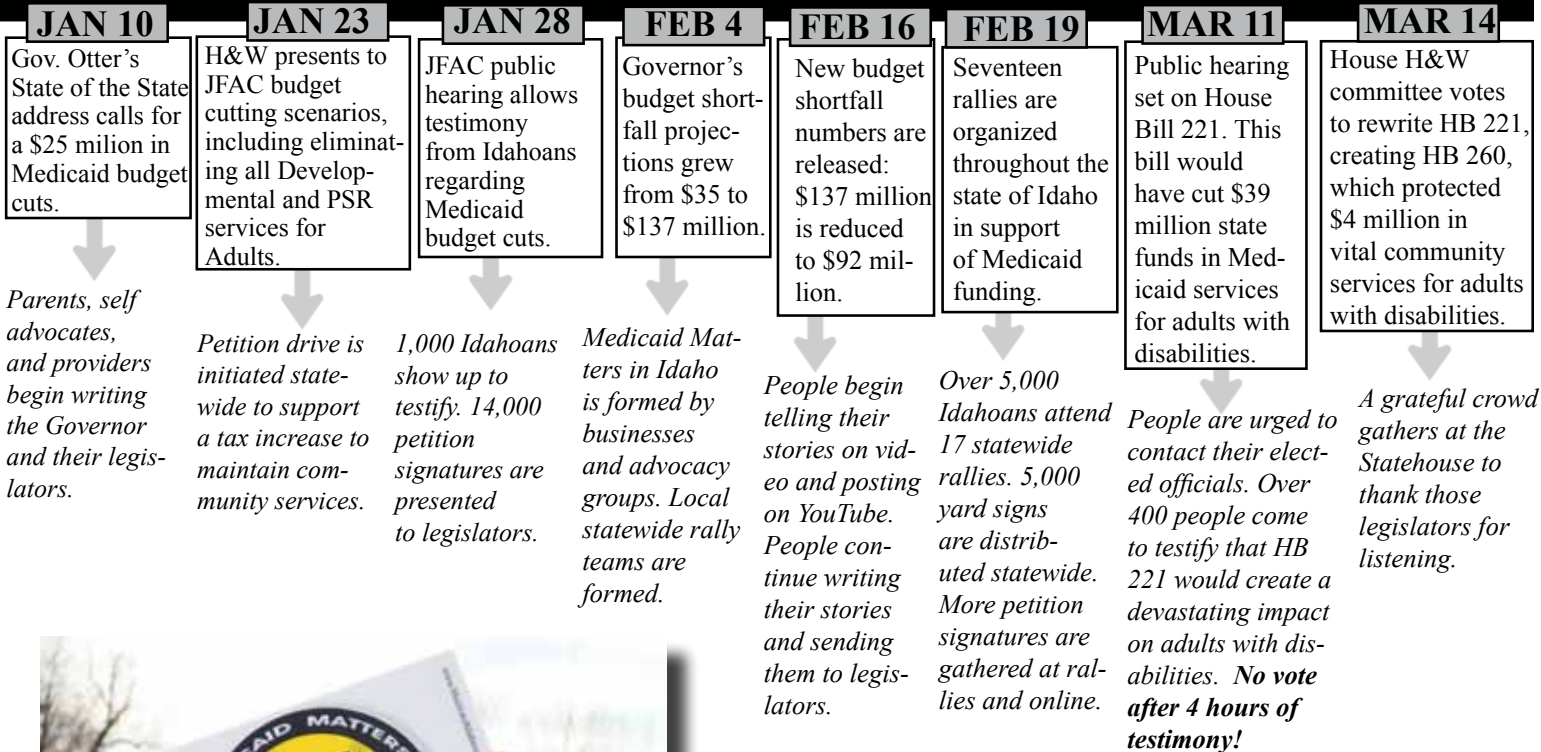
17,500 Petitioned our legislators

5,000+ Attended 17 Statewide Rallies



MEDICAID MATTERS IN IDAHO: TIMELINE OF EVENTS AND RESPONSES

2 0 1 1 L E G I S L A T I V E S E S S I O N



THE MOVEMENT
CONTINUES...

Check our website or Facebook page to get the latest on what we're doing!
www.MedicaidMattersInIdaho.com

Recap of Legislative Results

The cuts we prevented:

Thousands of ordinary Idahoans who understand why Medicaid matters told their stories to legislators which lead to the rewrite of House Bill 221 which would have:

- Cut developmental therapy for adults who are not on the Developmental Disabilities waiver;
- Forced people who are on the Developmental Disabilities waiver to lose services if they are 45 years of age or older and move to the Aged & Disabled waiver; and
- required people receiving psychosocial rehabilitation (PSR) services to be screened by a psychiatrist – effectively cutting people in most rural communities off simply because they do not have a psychiatrist in their community.

How did we succeed this session?

You told your story!

You and thousands of your neighbors told your story. Behind the delivery of these services is a real person, their family and their community. Legislators needed to hear those stories so they understood the true consequences of the proposed cuts. Because the federal funds provide a generous match to all dollars invested from Idaho in Medicaid, they also needed to learn about the far greater cuts that would be made with the loss of federal funds

Looking back 20 years

Over the past twenty years, Medicaid has been repeatedly cut for Developmental Disability Agency services for people with developmental disabilities. In fact, the only rate increases occurred in 1996, 1999 and 2006, totaling 7.4%. Those modest increases were far more than wiped out in cuts just in the past few years. In fact, Medicaid is so poorly supported in Idaho for home and community-based services that many providers have shut their doors and hundreds of people have left the professions that provide those services. They simply cannot afford to work in a field they care about.

DOCUMENT THE IMPACTS



SERVICES for people with disabilities in Idaho ARE CHANGING!

The Council on Developmental Disabilities and other disability groups want to know HOW THESE CHANGES ARE AFFECTING PEOPLE.

We would like to talk with:

- Adults with developmental disabilities
- Adults with mental illness
- Adults who have both a developmental disability and mental health issues
- Families of adults with disabilities

We plan to use this information to help policymakers understand how their decisions affect people with disabilities. Please share with us what is happening to your services and how that affects your life.

Please call the Council at 1-800-544-2433 to set up a phone interview or e-mail Christine Pisani at Christine.Pisani@icdd.idaho.gov

We must build on our actions!

We cannot afford to just rise up during a legislative session and try to stop the most devastating cuts. **We MUST ADVOCATE YEAR-ROUND** for a healthy and effective Medicaid system for home and community-based services. Given our interaction with current legislators, it is clear that most of them not only fail to understand the value of Medicaid's home and community-based services and the need to restore and expand them in Idaho, but they could easily return to new and equally disastrous cuts next year.

Will you be a part of providing continuing education for legislators and other community leaders?

The foundation we laid during the 2011 legislative session to protect Medicaid services put us in a solid position to engage in a variety of activities to continue educating legislators and community leaders about developmental disabilities, mental illnesses and the role that Medicaid plays. We have a statewide team working to support expanding these activities throughout the state (in each of the seven regions). Are you willing to help?

Go to our website for more information:
www.MedicaidMattersinIdaho.com



The Next Steps ...

Speak to Legislators and Community Organizations

Sharing stories of how Medicaid-funded services have impacted the lives of real people is the most powerful way for legislators and other community leaders to understand why Medicaid matters. But it is not easy for many people to share their stories, or to figure out how to contact legislators, to invite them to their home or workplace, to speak to civic organizations where community leaders gather.

The months between April through December, however, when the Idaho Legislature is out of session are far better for in-depth, local meetings and presentations than the frenzied three months of January through March. This is even more true during non-election years – which place additional demands on a legislators time. 2011 is a non-election year for legislators. *So, NOW is when we need you!*

Set up face-to-face meetings with legislators: invite them to your home or place of work - where Medicaid-funded home and community services are delivered. Introduce them to participants, family members, providers and others who benefit from the involvement of individuals with disabilities in the community.

Set up face-to-face meetings with community leaders: Legislators rely on the wisdom and experience of a variety of people in the community to make choices on budgets and other legislation. If those community leaders understand Medicaid, they too can be your advocates. But if they are un-aware of the vital role Medicaid plays, a legislator's lack of understanding risks being compounded.



Host a Local Training

Local training on how to speak to legislators and to testify: Will you help host a local training for people who are willing to speak to legislators and other community leaders and to testify before a committee but are looking for some additional skills and encouragement?

Writing Letters is Always Valuable

Write letters to your legislators: If you were not able to write to your legislator during the session sharing your story, take time now to write to them. If you did write letters during the session, write again and share an update on how the Medicaid cuts have impacted you and your family. Keeping up the communication is important so that you become one of the experts on Medicaid your legislators can turn to. Remember: you have 3 legislators, one in the State Senate and two in the State House of Representatives. Check [web address] to find out who they are and their local address (when the Idaho Legislature is not in session you should contact them at their local address).

Write letters-to-the-editor: Keep up the communication with your community, too. Plan to write several letters to your local newspaper telling your story about why it is so important for individuals with disabilities, family members and providers are such important parts of the community. Explain how Medicaid is provides critical – but certainly not all – of the tools you need to live in the community where you contribute your time, talent and resources. Ask your newspaper if they will occasionally let you author a longer commentary for the paper as well.

Invite Others to Become Involved

Take time NOW to ask your friends and colleagues at work, at church, in your neighborhood, etc. to become involved with you to contact legislators, arrange speakers, write letters-to-the-editor, etc. The more voices, the better. Remember, silence is our biggest obstacle.

Yard signs

If you have one, keep your Medicaid Matters in Idaho yard sign. Put it out for a week or two and then bring it in for a while then put it out again. This way, people notice and more people may ask you why Medicaid matters to you. It is a great opening to tell your story again! (Yard signs should be put on private property with permission of the owner, not on public property or rights-of-way).

The Movement Continues...But only with your help!

Please consider participating in any of the above mentioned “Next Steps.” Your efforts will help keep this issue in the forefront and strengthen our ability to successfully advocate for home and community based services. We must not let anyone forget that MEDICAID MATTERS!

*Did you contact your legislator or community leader? Let us know about it!
Contact us at medicaid.matters@mycpid.com.*



Disability Advocacy Day

Restore*Rebuild*Renew

a workshop that educates & empowers

Advocacy Workshops Offered

9:00am-3:30pm

9:00-12:00 Morning Agenda

Medicaid Matters In My Life: Self advocates, parents, providers and community leaders untied last year to send a clear message to legislators that "Medicaid Matters". This session tells the story of a campaign that made a difference in protecting vital community services fro Idahoans with disabilities. Local advocates, parents and providers will share their stories.

Medicaid 101: Learn how Medicaid works, who is eligible, and who gets which services. Learn about the changes to Medicaid services from the 2011 legislature.

12:00-1:00 Lunch on your own (Box lunches may be purchased when you register)

1:00-3:30 Afternoon Agenda

Legislative Process: If you would like to know how the legislative process works and how you can keep up with what is happening, this workshop is for you. Learn about how laws are made, the role of leadership and committees, the importance of rules, and how budgets are set. Do you know who represents you in the legislature? This session will how you how to find out.

Your Voice, Your Story: Talking to Your Legislator: You don't have to be a policy expert tot talk effectively with your legislator. Instead there is power in telling your own story. This session will give you a basic outline for telling your story and then you will have the chance to practice with others so you can get comfortable speaking up about the things you care about.

The Movement Continues...Rebuild, Restore, Renew: Medicaid is an important part of the fabric of supports that help people with disabilities to live in the community. This session focuses on what we must do to rebuild a quality community system of support, restore vital services that have been eliminated by recent budget cuts and renew our commitment to advocating for choice and independence for all Idahoans.

Cost if **FREE!** Attend *morning, afternoon or all day.*



Sponsored by:
Consortium for Idahoans with Disabilities
&
Medicaid Matters in Idaho

For more information visit www.medicaidmattersinidaho.com

To register please contact Richelle Tierney by:

Calling 1-800-850-7511

Emailing: richelle.tierney@mycpid.com

Online: www.medicaidmattersinidaho.com



Everyone
is
Welcome...



Self Advocates
Parents
Providers
Community
Members

Workshops
offered in
4 Idaho
Locations



Nov. 12th
Idaho Falls
Eastern Idaho Tech

Nov. 19th
Coeur d'Alene
Harding Center

Dec. 3rd
Twin Falls
T.F. Reformed Church

Dec. 10th
Boise
Boise Capitol Bldg

