

REPORTER

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Support for Medicaid Expansion

According to recent polls, access to affordable health care is one of the most important issues on voters' minds this election season. Not a week goes by without some aspect of the cost of health care, or Medicaid Expansion, appearing in the headlines and on the evening news. The debate between what is now law and those that oppose Expansion is being closely monitored by the 70,000 Mainers that are eligible to receive MaineCare but who still can't get it due to our governor's delay in implementing the law.

As Executive Director of Sacopee Valley Health Center I witness firsthand the need in our community for expanding access to high-quality health care. We provide over 24,000 patient visits each year at our health center. We are proud of the work we do. Once Medicaid Expansion is implemented, we will be able to see more patients and do even more to address important issues such as the opioid epidemic.

For people in our most rural and underserved areas, access to quality health care is dependent on things many of us take for granted, such as access to transportation, food and lodging, among others. Mainers shouldn't have to pick between putting food on the table or going to the doctor. When it comes to increasing access to preventive and primary care for those that need it most, implementation of Medicaid Expansion is a chief way to prevent Mainers from having to make those impossible choices.

Unfortunately, however, until our elected officials implement the law as passed, many people will continue to go without the care they need, de-

serve, and are due under the law.

This year's candidates have made their positions known on Medicaid Expansion and bold lines have been drawn. Voters have a clear choice in November. We can elect local, state and federal candidates who strongly support the right of Mainers to have timely access to high quality, affordable health care or we can turn our back on those who most urgently need our support.

Maine has a longstanding history of caring for those in need and I, for one, hope the vote on November 6th reflects that tradition of support.

—Lynn Kearney

Executive Director

Sacopee Valley Health Center

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