

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEW Medicaid coverage available for more North Dakota children with disabilities

BISMARCK – Governor John Hoeven announced today that some middle income families will soon be able to access comprehensive health coverage for their disabled children through the North Dakota Medicaid program. The new “buy-in” program is available April 1, 2008.

The program is intended to improve health care for children who are considered disabled under the Social Security Act, and may benefit several hundred North Dakota children. According to the North Dakota Department of Human Services’ Medicaid Director Maggie Anderson, to qualify a family’s net income cannot exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level (or \$3,533/month for a family of four). Qualifying families will pay a monthly premium.

“Taking care of children and families in need is one of the most important things we can do in the area of health care,” Hoeven said. “This program will help families who don’t normally qualify for Medicaid to either obtain health care coverage or supplement their private insurance. That will provide important financial assistance, while ensuring the special health needs of their children are met.”

Donene Feist, an advocate and state director of Family Voices of North Dakota said, “North Dakota’s Children with Disabilities Coverage program was the first in the country to be passed because families, agencies, and state policy makers worked together to find a solution. Many families raising children with special health care needs have private insurance. However, they often find that their health plans have limits or deny coverage for needed services. North Dakota families will now be able to access the Medicaid program as a critical supplemental insurance. This moves us forward in the right direction and away from financial ruin due to medical debt.”

Families of children with disabilities can apply for coverage at their county social service office. Families will need to bring proof of citizenship and identity such as birth certificates, approved photo identification, and social security numbers, as well as proof of income such as paycheck stubs or tax forms.

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Families who wish to apply for the health coverage can complete the [Application for Health Care Coverage](#): State Form Number (SFN) 502. Families who want to apply for Medicaid coverage along with economic assistance programs should complete an [Application for Assistance](#) (SFN 405).

If a family has not applied for Social Security Disability through the Social Security Administration, a Department of Human Services' review team may determine whether a child qualifies as disabled according to Social Security Administration guidelines.

Families of children with disabilities are encouraged to apply. Families with questions should contact their [county social service office](#).

Feist said Family Voices of North Dakota can help families complete the Medicaid application process. Family Voices can be reached at 1-888-522-9654.

The Children with Disabilities Coverage was authorized by Congress in the federal Family Opportunity Act of 2005. Governor John Hoeven signed North Dakota's bill into law on April 17, 2007, in a ceremony attended by families, advocates, state agency representatives and bill sponsors.

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