

Attending Local Forums

It is critical that Kansans take an active role in informing lawmakers about the importance of expanding KanCare, the state's Medicaid program. The Alliance for a Healthy Kansas encourages all Kansans to actively engage legislators at local town hall meetings or legislative forums.

We know asking questions in a public setting may not be natural for everyone. To make the process easier, we have drafted some sample questions about key issues related to expanding KanCare.

KanCare Expansion, Jobs, and Economic Development

Medicaid expansion will bring millions of dollars into communities to pay for health care services—increasing demand, enhancing revenue, and creating jobs. These new dollars and new jobs create economic growth and enhance state tax revenues.

QUESTION: Are you in favor of creating new jobs and economic growth in Kansas by expanding KanCare?

KanCare Expansion and Taxes

Kansas has forfeited the return of more than \$3.7 billion of our federal taxes by not expanding KanCare. This total grows by \$1.8 million every day. By refusing expansion, our tax dollars instead go to states like California, Colorado, and New York to provide health care to their residents. In addition, these dollars could replace some of the millions in local taxes that many Kansans pay to cover uncompensated care and support their hospitals and other health care providers.

QUESTION: Are you in favor of expanding KanCare and returning Kansans' federal tax dollars to the state?

KanCare Expansion and the State Budget

The federal government covers 90% of the cost of Medicaid expansion. This means that for every dollar invested by the state, the federal government provides nine dollars in return. Because of this beneficial match, coupled with reduction in state spending for the uninsured and economic growth created by returning millions of dollars of federal taxes to the state, states that have expanded Medicaid have experienced little or no cost to the state budget.

QUESTION: Given that expansion is a low- or no-cost investment for the state, are you in favor of expanding KanCare?

KanCare Expansion, Poverty, and Family Finances

Medicaid expansion has been shown to reduce debt and financial hardship, help people remain employed or get back in the workforce, and lift people out of poverty. Residents of states, like Kansas, that have not expanded Medicaid are more likely to experience medical debt and bankruptcy.

QUESTION: Given its positive effects on family finances and poverty, do you support expanding KanCare?

KanCare Expansion and Rural Hospitals

Thirty rural hospitals in Kansas are financially vulnerable and at risk of closure. Research shows that rural hospitals in states, like Kansas, that have not expanded Medicaid, are six times more likely to close than those in expansion states.

QUESTION: Given its beneficial impact on rural hospitals and rural communities, are you in favor of expanding KanCare?

KanCare Expansion and Access to Care

150,000 Kansans are in the coverage gap and most have no access to affordable health insurance. States that have expanded Medicaid have reduced uninsurance much more quickly than states, like Kansas, that have not. The result is enhanced access to all services, including increased use of primary and preventive care..

QUESTION: Are you in favor of expanding KanCare so that thousands of Kansans can access affordable health care?

KanCare Expansion and Health

In states that have expanded Medicaid, beneficiaries experience enhanced health status, improved mental health, better ability to address unhealthy behaviors such as tobacco use, and are more able to stay in the workforce. Medicaid expansion is proven to save lives.

QUESTION: We know that KanCare expansion will improve the health of Kansans. Do you support expanding KanCare?

KanCare Expansion and Premiums/Lockouts

Some expansion proposals would charge low-income Kansans a monthly premium to qualify for health coverage. Unpaid premiums for two months would result in a denial of coverage for six months. These types of provisions have been a barrier to access in other states, driving down the number of people actually covered.

QUESTION: Do you support denying coverage to low-income Kansans because they can't afford premiums? Do you support lockout provisions in a KanCare expansion bill?