

Experts Discuss Medicaid Expansion Options During NET News Special

In 2013, the Nebraska Legislature will make important decisions affecting the health care of the state's residents. One of the key decisions will be whether or not to expand Medicaid. This expansion was originally part of the Affordable Care Act passed by Congress in 2010, but last year's U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding the law made this provision optional for the states.

Advocates and critics of expanding Medicaid will discuss the pros and cons for Nebraska during the NET News special, "Nebraska Health Care: Moving Forward," airing Friday, Jan. 25, at 6:30 p.m. CT on NET Radio, followed by a television broadcast at 7 p.m. CT on NET1/HD. It repeats on Sunday, Jan. 27, at 9 p.m. CT and Wednesday, Jan. 30, at 6 p.m. CT on NET2. The program can also be seen Thursday, Jan. 31, at 10:30 p.m. CT on NET1/HD.

Proponents of expanding Medicaid say it will make health coverage available for many more low-income Nebraskans, helping them get preventative care rather than making an emergency room visit for more costly treatment later. Critics say the expansion will cost the state too much money, diverting resources from other needs such as funding for K-12 and higher education.

NET News Legislative reporter Fred Knapp will moderate the panel discussion, "Nebraska Health Care: Moving Forward." The program features two state senators with differing perspectives on the issue -- Sen. Jeremy Nordquist, District 7 (Omaha) and Sen. Jim Smith, District 14 (Papillion). Adding to the legislative points of view will be Sharon Lind, chief executive officer at Ogallala Community Hospital in Ogallala, and Jim Vokal, executive director of the Platte Institute for Economic Research.

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