

Suggested Projects: Presidential Innovation Fellows
19 - The Medicaid Show - PBS: Citizen Questions and Feedback

Earlier, I suggested a Medicare call-in show on PBS to receive feedback from some of the 47 million Americans who may need more information and data, communicated more clearly. The same need for feedback also applies to Medicaid, which served about 62,000,000 (62 million!) Americans and spent about \$390 billion in 2010.

Medicaid is a huge and complex system. The information gap - i.e., the unmet need for information delivered in usable and understood form - is likely to be large. It includes people who are under-age, poorer, less educated, and often in poorer health (long term care). They also, often, have been adversely affected by life and have more difficulty coping and making rational choices: alcoholism and drug abuse, chronic mental illness, disabled, in nursing homes, family violence and abusive relationships, stress, teenage pregnancy, AIDS, unemployed, depressed, etc. They may not know about or get all of the benefits to which they are entitled and need.

Maybe a PBS Medicaid show is a bad solution. These people often use Medicaid via a local welfare system that has a legacy of status dramas - applicants sit for long periods waiting for a bureaucracy to address their case, they often must produce stacks of supporting paperwork or bills, they have case workers who interpret the rules and who may (or may not) fight for them. They sometimes may not know what a W-2 form is or what to do if they have not filed a 1040 form and cannot locate the number on line x. But an experiment could give very useful information.

[I have uploaded a lot of ideas to different project areas. I have put reference copies online at www.policyscience.net II. C. - the Medicare Show suggestion is # 18.]

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