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Piscataquis County Will Benefit if Maine Accepts Federal Health Care Funds

Accepting Federal Health Care Funds Saves Lives

Access to care allows individuals to see a regular doctor rather than visit an ER, and get preventive care and disease screenings rather than putting off health problems that could result in life threatening consequences. Access to care through Medicaid is associated with a 6% decrease in deaths among adults 20-64 over a five-year period.¹

- In 2012, **1,900** people were uninsured in Piscataquis County, which is about **14%** of all adults under age 65 in the county.²
- If Maine accepts new federal health care funding, **1,088** more people in Piscataquis County will be eligible for health insurance through MaineCare.³ This includes **323** people in Piscataquis County who, without federal funds, lost their traditional Medicaid coverage on December 31, 2013 because of previously enacted cuts to MaineCare.⁴
- People below the poverty line (\$11,770 for individuals and \$20,090 for a family of three) are ineligible for financial subsidies through the marketplace, and those just over the poverty line will likely be unable to afford premiums and out of pocket costs, even with available subsidies.

Accepting Federal Health Care Funds Saves Money and Drives the Economy

Federal funding will cover 100% of the costs for newly insured individuals through 2016, and no less than 90% thereafter. Piscataquis County will receive a significant economic boost:

- If Maine accepts the federal funds, by 2016, an additional **\$5 million** will be spent annually in Piscataquis County hospitals, doctor's offices, and other health care settings.⁵
- This new federal spending will stimulate approximately **\$6 million** in additional economic activity a year in Piscataquis County by 2016.⁶
- In Piscataquis County, **one in six** jobs are in a health care related field. Accepting federal funds will produce approximately **60** new jobs in the county and **3,000** new jobs in Maine. This includes **29** new hospital jobs in Piscataquis County.⁷

Piscataquis County and Maine Will Benefit

The benefits in Piscataquis County will be repeated throughout Maine, creating a healthier population and a healthier economy for everyone. Piscataquis County and Maine businesses will retain a competitive advantage against neighboring states that have accepted federal funds, avoid tax penalties under the Affordable Care Act, and have a healthier workforce. The bottom line: Maine stands to gain over **\$350 million** in federal funds annually, tens of millions of which will come directly to Piscataquis County.

¹ Benjamin D. Sommers, Katherine Baiker and Arnold Epstein, "Mortality and Access to Care among Adults after State Medicaid Expansions." *New England Journal of Medicine*, 1025, 1028 (2012).

² U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, 2012 data. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/did/www/sahie/>

³ Maine Equal Justice Partners and Maine Center for Economic Policy, "Federal Healthcare Funding Makes Dollars and Sense for Maine." March 2013. Available at: <http://www.covermainenow.org>. Total includes newly eligible and previously eligible individuals.

⁴ According to information provided by DHHS on September 6, 2013, in Piscataquis County, 111 people covered by a waiver for childless adults between 100-133% FPL and 212 people covered by a waiver for parents between 100-133% FPL will lose coverage on January 1, 2014.

⁵ Maine Center for Economic Policy. "Unprecedented Opportunity: Federal Health Care Funds Will Deliver 4,400 Jobs and \$500,000,000 in Annual Economic Activity to Maine by 2016." January, 2014. Available at: <http://www.mecep.org/view.asp?news=2459>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.