



**National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society**
Greater Carolinas
Chapter

Medicaid

The Medicaid program provides health coverage to nearly 9 million non-elderly individuals with disabilities, and about 1 million South Carolinians. It offers prescription drug coverage and standard medical benefits, like physician and hospital care; home- and community-based services that allow people with MS to remain independent and avoid institutionalization; and provides other forms of long-term services and support.

Additional advantages of Medicaid Expansion:

- The \$11.2 billion in new federal funding tied to Medicaid expansion will result in \$1.5 billion in labor income and nearly **44,000 new jobs for South Carolina** from 2014-2020.
- There are virtually no state expenses for expanding Medicaid to the newly eligible during the first three years of expansion (2014-2016), as the Federal government pays 100% of the cost (the federal match will fall gradually to 90%, but will never fall below that – meaning that SC will never pay more than 10% for the newly eligible population).

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Carolinas Chapter, Supports Efforts to Ensure That all Qualified South Carolinians Have Access to Quality, Affordable and Comprehensive Health Care.

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) typically is diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, when most are raising families, advancing careers and maximizing their earnings. MS experts recommend people living with MS should begin treatment with one of the disease-modifying medications as soon as possible. Benefits of these medications may include:

- Reduction in numbers of new lesions;
- Reduction in the number; of exacerbations (also called relapses, attacks, flare-ups);
- Reduction in progression of disability; and
- Probable reduction in future disease activity and improvement in quality of life.

The financial impact of MS on individuals and families can be devastating. Seventy percent of persons with MS report difficulty paying for health care, even with health insurance, and many are forced to delay doctor visits and split their medication doses or skip them altogether.

Leveraging federal dollars to provide health insurance to low-income South Carolinians is a smart investment that **would provide coverage for the 250,000 South Carolinians** that fall below 138 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), **including people with MS.**

South Carolina should leverage our federal tax-payer dollars and apply them to a state solution that expands and improves our Medicaid program.