

# Paying a fair share for health care

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With a shift away from employer provided and private health care coverage, it's time for everyone to pay their fair share of health care costs.

Employer-based coverage for the under-65 population in the United States has declined by 5.4 percent between 2000 and 2007. Over that time period, the trends indicate a significant shift from private to public insurance, especially for children.

This comes at a time when working families lack health insurance. More than eight in 10 of the non-elderly uninsured (82.8 percent) live in families where the head of the family works, according to a 2007 study.

There were more than 4 million more uninsured workers in the United States in 2007 than in 2000. Owing to this may be that low-income workers are less likely to be offered health insurance.

Eyeing a new form of single-payer health care system, the WEAC Board adopted a principle that **individuals, employers and government must be required to pay their fair share of health care costs.**

Disparities between those who don't have health insurance costs and those who do is significantly impacting the health care system. The uninsured often pay more for medical care (2.5 times) because they can't negotiate the discounts insurance companies receive. Those with employer-sponsored health insurance paid an average of \$922 in added premiums in 2007 because of costs in treating patients who didn't have insurance.

This disparity in access to effective health care services that improve health and extend survival results is an inequality that runs counter to American ideals of equal opportunity, fairness and justice.

The need is there for clear access to affordable health care for every person in Wisconsin. In the state, 1.2 million people younger than 65 – nearly one in four non-elderly Wisconsinites – are in families that will spend more than 10 percent of their pre-tax family income on health care costs in 2008. The vast majority (90.1 percent) of these people have insurance.

In Wisconsin, 322,000 non-elderly people are in families that will spend more than 25 percent of their pre-tax income on health care costs in 2008.

Facts such as these are driving the call for single-payer health care in Wisconsin and across the country. To get involved in the informational campaign regarding health care, e-mail [healthcare@weac.org](mailto:healthcare@weac.org) for e-alerts and share your story by sending it to [shareyourstory@weac.org](mailto:shareyourstory@weac.org).

For more information about health care reform, visit [www.weac.org/healthcare](http://www.weac.org/healthcare).