



U.S. SENATOR MARIA CANTWELL WASHINGTON

MARCH 2025 SNAPSHOT: MEDICAID CUTS THREATEN SEATTLE'S HEALTH CARE

This snapshot report includes data provided by local hospitals, clinics, and the State of Washington. Some quick facts include:

- Medicaid funded 22.6% of inpatient care and 18.1% of outpatient care at hospitals in Western Washington in 2023. Western Washington hospitals saw 623,549 Medicaid patients in 2023. **Hospitals cannot turn these patients away. But treating them without Medicaid reimbursements would be financially ruinous.**
- In the Federal Way, Burien, SeaTac, and Kent areas, more than 70% of children are enrolled in Apple Health (Medicaid in the State of Washington).
- Medicaid is the largest payer at Seattle Children's, accounting for over 50% of patients. 39% of Harborview's revenue came from Medicaid in 2024.
- The State of Washington ranks 51st in the nation in patient-to-bed ratio, at 1.6 beds per 1,000 residents. By causing likely closures of hospitals in rural areas, Medicaid cuts would worsen our state's patient-to-bed ratio.

As the following data and statements from hospitals and doctors show, Medicaid cuts would make health care worse for all Seattle residents.

IN WESTERN WA, MEDICAID CUTS HIT BLUE-COLLAR FAMILIES HARDEST

Children in Seattle's blue-collar strongholds would feel the deepest pain from Medicaid cuts, according to data provided by the Washington State Health Care Authority showing Apple Health enrollment by state legislative district.

MEDICAID IN STATE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS			
State Leg. District	Communities	Children (0-19) on Medicaid	% of Children on Medicaid
33	Burien, SeaTac, Kent	26,930	71%
30	Federal Way	28,680	70%
47	Auburn	25,738	61%
11	Renton	18,803	51%
37	Rainier Valley	16,207	50%

Source: Washington State Health Care Authority

MEDICAID CUTS WOULD DEVASTATE THE FINANCES OF KING COUNTY'S MAJOR HOSPITALS

In state fiscal year 2024, Medicaid paid \$3.36 billion for hospital care in the State of Washington. Congressional Districts 7 and 9, comprising much of urban Seattle, received the highest amounts of Medicaid payments for hospital care, at \$686 million and \$545 million, respectively.

In 2023, according to the Washington State Hospital Association, Medicaid funded 22.6% of inpatient care and 18.1% of outpatient care at hospitals in Western Washington. Western Washington hospitals saw 623,549 Medicaid patients in 2023.

For example, Medicaid makes up around 30% of Providence's patient population mix at its King County facilities. In 2024, Providence saw 38,091 Medicaid patients at those facilities. Of those patients, 18.1% were under age 19, 77.3% were aged 19-64, and 5% were aged 64+.

As Washington State Hospital Association CEO Cassie Sauer explains, **"Apple Health doesn't just provide access to health care for nearly two million Washingtonians, it provides vital funding for our health care system. Hospitals rely on Medicaid funds to sustain services, and when hospitals cut services, it impacts everyone in the community."**

MEDICAID CUTS ENDANGER WORLD-CLASS TREATMENT AT SEATTLE CHILDREN'S, FRED HUTCH, HARBORVIEW

Seattle is fortunate to have three of the world's leading specialty institutions: Seattle Children's, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, and Harborview. Medicaid cuts would endanger their ability to continue some services – for everyone.

Medicaid is the largest payer at Seattle Children's, accounting for over 50% of patients. **"Reductions would limit services for all patients, as hospitals cannot selectively cut services based on insurance type,"** says Seattle Children's CEO Jeff Sperring, MD. **"We cannot sustain further cuts without jeopardizing access to lifesaving pediatric care."**

If institutions like Seattle Children's end certain services, Seattleites and people across the Pacific Northwest who need that treatment – no matter what health insurance they have – would have to travel to other hospitals.

Cuts and delayed treatment at Harborview could have starker consequences – at trauma centers, every minute counts. In 2024, 34% of all Harborview patients were on Medicaid, or 32,664 patients. That includes 3,657 level 1 pediatric trauma and burn care patients on Medicaid. 39% of Harborview's revenue came from Medicaid in 2024.

"WE CANNOT SUSTAIN FURTHER CUTS WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING ACCESS TO LIFESAVING PEDIATRIC CARE."

DR. JEFF SPERRING, SEATTLE CHILDREN'S CEO

According to Harborview CEO Sommer Kleweno-Walley, **“every dollar of Medicaid reimbursement we receive allows us to care for the most critically ill and injured patients across the region along with providing health care to the most vulnerable in our**

“HARBORVIEW CANNOT DELIVER ON ITS MISSION ... WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF A STRONG FEDERAL MEDICAID PROGRAM.”

SOMMER KLEWENO-WALLEY,
HARBORVIEW CEO

community. Harborview cannot deliver on its mission to care for every patient without the support of a strong federal Medicaid program.”

Across UW Medicine, in 2024, 22% of revenue came from Medicaid, 23% came from Medicare, and the remainder came from commercial payers.

The Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center is a national leader in cancer care and disease research. **“These cuts would be devastating,”** says Dr. Rachel Issaka, a gastroenterologist and researcher at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center and the University of Washington, **“ranging from the inability to screen and prevent cancer, to the inability to treat people once they're diagnosed with cancer, and then risking cancer returning after they've already gone through treatment and have been cured.”**

If Medicaid is cut, Dr. Issaka says, **“I worry about the capacity of the institutions that treat cancer to be able to continue to absorb these patients without any reimbursements on care.”**

NEIGHBORHOOD CLINICS WOULD CUT SERVICES & JOBS WITHOUT MEDICAID

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) give people the option to receive primary care, maternal care, vaccines, and other services in their neighborhoods. FQHCs across the Seattle region shared their proportions of Medicaid patients and revenue for this report.

- **Sea Mar Community Health Center (locations across WA):** 65% of revenue comes from Medicaid; served 137,016 Medicaid patients in 2024.
- **HealthPoint (20 King County locations):** 77% of revenue comes from Medicaid; served 61,849 patients on Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, and other public insurance.
- **Neighborcare Health (30 Seattle-area locations):** Served 28,004 Medicaid patients in 2024.
- **King County’s Public Health Centers and Clinics:** 31% of total revenue comes from Medicaid; serve approximately 27,000 patients annually.
- **Seattle Roots Community Health (seven Seattle locations):** 47% of revenue comes from Medicaid; serve 7,373 Medicaid patients annually.
- **Seattle Indian Health Board (Int. District, Pioneer Sq., Lake City clinics):** 73% of revenue from Medicaid; served 6,062 Medicaid patients in 2024.

Medicaid cuts would endanger FQHCs’ ability to keep their doors open and retain staff.

According to Janine Childs, CFO of Neighborcare Health, Medicaid cuts **“would impact our ability to retain current staffing levels, causing a reduction in staff that would diminish access to care for patients who need it most. Each of our programs would be impacted. These include critical services such as our midwifery services, patient outreach and eligibility, and the site-based care we provide at supportive housing sites and schools.”**

Sea Mar officials shared additional projections for how devastating different levels of Medicaid cuts would be:

- A 50% reduction in the program would mean a revenue decrease of \$185,410,348 and up to 1,175 lost jobs. 73,603 Sea Mar patients would lose coverage.
- A 25% reduction in the program would mean a revenue decrease of \$92,705,174 and up to 600 lost jobs. 36,802 Sea Mar patients would lose coverage.

According to Seattle Indian Health Board President and CEO Esther Lucero (Diné), Medicaid **“sustains the entire Native health care system. Without it, we couldn’t provide critical services like vaccines, dental care, and mental health support. Cutting Medicaid would be dangerous and would only deepen health disparities in Native communities.”**

“WITHOUT [MEDICAID] WE COULDN’T PROVIDE CRITICAL SERVICES LIKE VACCINES, DENTAL CARE, AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT.”
SEATTLE INDIAN HEALTH BOARD PRESIDENT &
CEO ESTHER LUCERO (DINÉ)

MEDICAID CUTS INCREASE RISK OF DISEASE OUTBREAKS

An infant tested [positive](#) for measles in King County on February 26, 2025. At least [fourteen states](#) this year have reported measles cases, and so far [two people, both unvaccinated, have died](#) – including an unvaccinated child in Texas who last month became the first person in the U.S. to die of measles in a decade.

Vaccines are essential for preventing the spread of diseases like measles and influenza. Medicaid helps ensure that more people receive vaccines – which benefits entire communities.

FQHCs provide hundreds of thousands of vaccines annually to Medicaid patients, including:

- 164,416 vaccines administered by Sea Mar Community Health Centers
- 1,935 vaccines administered by Seattle Indian Health Board
- 17,952 vaccines administered by Neighborcare Health
- 5,879 vaccines administered by Seattle Roots Community Health
- 15,800 vaccines administered at King County’s public health centers.

“MATERNAL MORTALITY WOULD SKYROCKET” WITHOUT MEDICAID

According to data from the Washington State Hospital Association, Medicaid paid for 21,383 births at Western Washington hospitals in 2023. In the State of Washington, Medicaid recipients are fully [covered during pregnancy and birth](#), including prenatal care; delivery in a hospital, birthing center, or home birth; and mental health services.

Providence, one of the largest health care systems in Western Washington, reports that Medicaid financed 12.5% of their births and 31.4% of their pregnancy care at their King County facilities in 2024.

If Medicaid no longer covered births, more providers would likely have to close their labor and delivery units, and every pregnant woman in those communities would need to travel further for care.

According to Nicole Solvay, CNM ARNP and the Midwifery Co-Director for Neighborcare Health, **“Without Medicaid to cover primary care prenatal and postpartum care, patients will end up relying on ER or urgent care, resulting in higher c-section rates, hemorrhages, after delivery complications such as infection, pre-eclampsia, substance use disorders and more. The maternal morbidity and mortality rate would skyrocket and be absolutely devastating to families and communities.”**

1,205 Medicaid patients received OB care at Neighborcare Health in 2024.

MEDICAID HOSPITAL BIRTHS BY REGION		
Region	2022	2023
Eastern WA (Congressional Districts 4 & 5)	8,174	8,530
Western WA	20,970	21,383
Grand Total	29,144	29,913

Source: Washington State Hospital Association

Medicaid cuts would not only affect Washington’s over 1.95 million Medicaid enrollees – they would reduce access to services like emergency care, maternal care, and vaccines for entire communities. The Seattle area is growing and the focus should be on expanding our health care system, not shrinking it.