# Fact Sheet: Oklahoma

## Impact of the American Health Care Act on Oklahoma

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The American Health Care Act would make health care unaffordable and inaccessible for millions of Americans. The impacts of the bill on Oklahomans are listed below.

### The bill reduces funding for Medicare, which will negatively affect current and future beneficiaries.

The bill repeals a 0.9 percent payroll tax on higher-income workers, which would remove over $100 billion over ten years from the Hospital Insurance trust fund. This would hasten the insolvency of Medicare and diminish Medicare’s ability to pay for services in the future. The bill also removes nearly $25 billion in required payments from pharmaceutical companies over ten years from the Part B trust fund, which would increase premiums for people on Medicare.

- In 2016, Medicare provided coverage for 649,629 Oklahomans of all ages, or about 17 percent of the state’s population.
- About 82 percent of Oklahomans with Medicare are over age 65 and 18 percent are younger people with disabilities under the age of 65.
- About 740,765 (or 19 percent of) of Oklahomans are between the ages of 50 and 64 today and will transition into Medicare over the next 15 years.

### Changes to age rating and tax credits would significantly increase premiums.

- About 61,937 (or 9 percent of) of Oklahomans between the ages of 50 and 64 are enrolled in the individual market and would be impacted by the AHCA’s age rating changes.
- 50- to 64-year-olds comprise 39 percent of all adults receiving premium tax credit assistance in Oklahoma.

- A 55-year-old in Oklahoma earning $25,000 annually could see her premium increase by as much as $9,849.
- A 64-year-old in Oklahoma earning $25,000 annually could see his premium increase by as much as $15,929.

### Older Oklahomans simply cannot afford to pay the higher premiums.

- In 2015, half of all Oklahomans ages 50-64 buying insurance in the individual market have incomes of $18,840 or less a year.

### The bill unfairly penalizes older Americans.

The bill discriminates against 6.1 million Americans ages 50-64 in the individual (non-group) health insurance market by allowing insurance companies to charge older people five times or more what others pay for the same coverage. At the same time, it significantly reduces tax credits now available to lower and middle-income older persons to help pay premium costs.

- It would allow insurance companies to once again charge higher premiums based on a person’s health condition (known as medical

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[Note: The document contains a table with additional data and statistics related to Medicare coverage and demographics.]

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underwriting), significantly raising premiums and making health care unaffordable.

- If Oklahoma chooses to establish a high-risk pool, Oklahomans with pre-existing conditions would face premiums of $24,819 or more in 2019.
- About 322,638 (or 45 percent of) 50-64 year olds in Oklahoma have a preexisting condition.

**The bill weakens protections for people with individual and employer coverage.**

It allows states to waive current standards for minimum coverage (known as Essential Health Benefits) allowing insurers to sell less comprehensive, potentially even skimpy coverage. The bill also weakens current protections that ensure a person doesn’t end up with catastrophic out-of-pocket costs. This weakening includes the requirement that insurance companies must limit consumers’ annual out-of-pocket costs (such as deductibles and copays). It also includes the ban on insurance companies setting caps on how much they would cover annually, or over a person’s lifetime. These changes would affect people in the individual market and those with employer-sponsored coverage. The result would be less choice and reduced access to needed services for people with pre-existing conditions.

- 61,937 (or 9 percent of) Oklahomans ages 50-64 receive coverage through the individual market and could be affected by the bill.
- The bill can also increase costs for 411,467 (or 58 percent of) Oklahomans ages 50-64 who receive coverage through their employer, by weakening current limits on their out-of-pocket costs.
- Every year, 93,078 Oklahomans ages 18-64 who work for a large employer leave or lose their jobs and may have to buy coverage in the individual market.

**The bill cuts over $800 billion from Medicaid.**

The bill creates a capped financing structure in the Medicaid program and cuts $839 billion – nearly 25 percent—over ten years. Both per capita cap and block grant financing would likely shift significant costs to states, state taxpayers, and families. The bill could lead to cuts in provider payments, program eligibility, services, or all of the above – ultimately harming some of our nation’s most vulnerable citizens.

- In 2017, more than 815,000 Oklahomans received health coverage and long-term services and supports (LTSS) through Medicaid.
- In FY 2013, about 127,000 low-income Medicare beneficiaries in Oklahoma received Medicaid.

Most people prefer to receive LTSS in their homes and communities. Nursing home care is generally more expensive than serving people in the community, but home and community-based services (HCBS) is an optional service in Medicaid. Cutting federal Medicaid spending jeopardizes access to HCBS, forcing people to rely on more expensive nursing home care.

- In FY2014, nursing facilities comprised 71.7 percent of Medicaid LTSS expenditures in Oklahoma for older adults and people with physical disabilities.

**The bill will significantly increase the number of uninsured Americans**

- 394,400 Oklahomans will lose coverage by 2026 as a result of the bill.

**Detailed source information available at:**


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