



# Medicaid **covers** US

We are your friends, your neighbors, your community.

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[www.MedicaidCoversUS.org](http://www.MedicaidCoversUS.org)



“ Medicaid made it possible  
for my daughter to get the  
surgery she needed to  
start walking.”

— Peyton with EmmaLynn, Bridgeport, AL

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## Introduction

Medicaid is a vital health insurance program for America's families. It allows children to reach their fullest potential, adults to get and stay healthy enough to work and be part of their communities and seniors and people with disabilities to get the care that can help them stay at home. Medicaid can be life-changing and lifesaving.

This storybook was designed to help you meet some of the Americans impacted by Medicaid. You will read stories of adults and children who have received critical and often lifesaving health care through Medicaid, health care providers who see the impact for their patients and adults who could benefit but are currently unable to gain access to health insurance through Medicaid.

Medicaid also helps in the fight against cancer. There are more than 700,000 Americans with a history of cancer currently covered by Medicaid. Among these cancer patients and survivors:<sup>1</sup>

- ★ 1 in 12 have served in the US Armed Forces
- ★ 1 in 5 could not afford to see a specialist
- ★ 1 in 10 reported difficulty with activities of daily living
- ★ Majority are non-Hispanic white female
- ★ Majority have at least a high school diploma or equivalent

A majority of Americans support Medicaid.<sup>2</sup>

- ★ 92% of voters feel Medicaid is an important program
- ★ 76% of voters feel positively about Medicaid including majority of voters across political party ideology feel positively about Medicaid
- ★ 70% of voters believe Medicaid plays a major role in helping low-income families and individuals support themselves financially

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*Medicaid Covers US* is a new project led by the American Cancer Society and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) to create a conversation about Medicaid and the role it plays in the health and well-being of our families, friends and communities. We're sharing stories about how having health insurance through Medicaid helps Americans stay healthy, go to work and care for their families. When we ensure that people get the care they need, our communities – our hospitals, schools and economy – thrive. Join the conversation and explore how Medicaid covers US.

1. Analysis provided to ACS CAN by Avalere Health. *Medicaid Covers US: Profiles of Medicaid Enrollees with Cancer*. Analysis performed March 2019. Analysis performed from data collected from Medicaid enrollees over the age of 15.

2. Research provided to ACS CAN by PerryUndem Research/Communication and Bellwether Research & Consulting. The survey was conducted March 15 – 21, 2019 using YouGov's nationally representative panel of 1,000 registered voters 18+ years old.

# Economy

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Medicaid strengthens our economy, promotes growth and creates jobs. When the workforce is healthy, productivity and innovation increase and individuals are better equipped to work and support their families.

## Debbie Stuart, VA



*To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.*

Debbie previously worked as the economic development director of Patrick County in rural, southwestern Virginia. In 2017 the local hospital closed, in part because Virginia had not yet expanded its Medicaid program, which would have reduced uncompensated care. After the closure, Debbie faced a difficult challenge: how to continue to recruit businesses to the area without a hospital in the county.

“If you’re trying to bring businesses in, access to health care is just critical,” Debbie said.

The closure of the only hospital in the county was not just bad for business and the local economy. The closest hospital is about 30 miles away over mostly winding mountain roads. Many residents worry about family and members of the community experiencing a health care emergency. “When mom and dad have grown up here, but the kids don’t live in town anymore, what are they going to do?” Debbie said.

“If you’re trying to bring businesses in, access to health care is just critical.”



## Anne Atlanta, GA



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

Anne lived in pain for nearly twenty years before Medicaid brought her relief. When she was 38, she began experiencing severe knee pain. The pain left her unable to keep up with her job as a delivery manager, but her insurance policy denied her request for knee replacement surgery. Eventually the pain was so unbearable she had to quit her job.

After leaving her job, Anne started a pet-sitting business, but couldn't afford to buy insurance and her knee pain steadily worsened, making it difficult to get around and keeping her up at night. After years of pain, Anne applied for Medicaid and qualified for coverage.

"If it wasn't for Medicaid, I don't know where I'd be," Anne said. "I feel like a productive member of society again. The program gave me back my life."

**“Thanks to the care I receive through Medicaid, I’m well enough to run my own business.”**



## Matt Baton Rouge, LA



To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

Matt is the CEO at CareSouth, a clinic providing medical and dental health in the Baton Rouge area. Over 60 percent of CareSouth's patients are covered by Medicaid, and prior to expansion, many were uninsured. Matt credits the expansion for improving the financial stability of the clinic and for real-life gains for the patients.

In the two years since expansion, the uninsured rate at their clinic has dropped from 30 percent to 10 percent. With more insured patients the organization has been able to increase its staff by 40 percent since 2016.

"We're seeing more people getting care," Matt said. And that matters because, as he says, "Health controls everything else you do in life."

"Health controls everything else you do in life."





## **Jeanette** Stuart, VA

“I’m glad that the expansion of Medicaid will help other rural hospitals in Virginia. But for ours, it was too late.”



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

## **Cindy** Thomson, GA

“I don’t think fighting a life-threatening disease should bankrupt a family. And I don’t think anyone should lose the chance to battle cancer because they don’t have coverage.”



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.



## **Doris** Shawnee, KS

“ I probably wouldn’t be able to keep my job for long if I didn’t have access to insurance.”



To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

## **Sheila** Durham, NC

“ Our family would have been devastated without Medicaid, which allowed my daughter to have the surgeries, aftercare, therapy and mental health support she needed to thrive. We didn’t have to choose between paying for groceries and paying for her health care.”



To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

# Health Care

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Medicaid allows doctors to treat patients in need, rural hospitals to keep their doors open and community health centers to continue to provide critical care.



*To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.*

Molly has been a social worker at the Christus Cancer Treatment Center in Shreveport for nine years. She helps patients and their families cope with the uncertainty and confusion that can accompany a cancer diagnosis.

Molly often sees patients who have lost their private insurance through their employer because they are too sick to keep working. “Health insurance is just so important because my patients need their treatment. Since the expansion of Medicaid, many of the patients have become eligible for Medicaid to cover the rest of their treatment,” she explains.

“Health insurance is just so important because my patients need their treatment.”



## Shaundelette Baton Rouge, LA



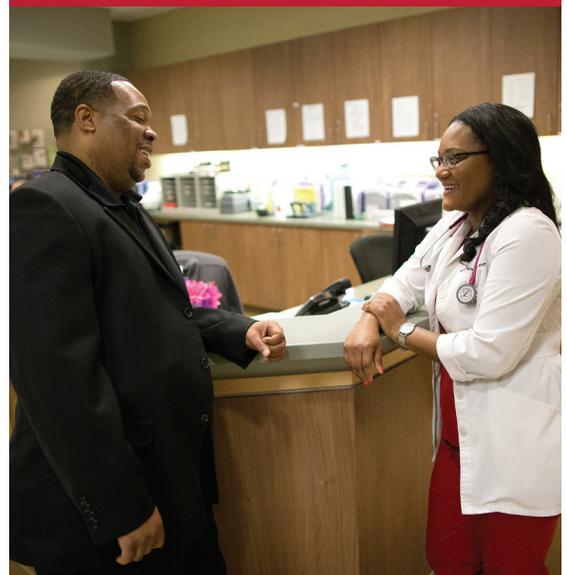
*To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.*

Shaundelette is a nurse practitioner at CareSouth in Baton Rouge. Most patients seen at the clinic are low-income and many suffer from chronic illnesses.

Shaundelette has seen the dramatic impact of Medicaid expansion at the clinic. They have been able to serve a larger number of patients and receive a greater number of referrals, allowing them to better collaborate and coordinate care.

“Medicaid allows the patients I serve to have essential health coverage,” Shaundelette said. “Without it, they would have remained uninsured and been forced to let their diseases go unmanaged, untreated or undiagnosed leading to detrimental and, in some cases, fatal outcomes.”

“ Medicaid allows the patients I serve to have essential health coverage.”



**Lisa** Wichita, KS



To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

Lisa is an oncology nurse navigator at Ascension Via Christi in Wichita. She helps uninsured patients get colonoscopies but, with limited funds, she must turn people away daily. “People want to take care of themselves,” she said.

Lisa knows first-hand how important colonoscopies are. When she turned 50, she got a colonoscopy and had polyps removed. But her brother-in-law, who was uninsured when he turned 50, did not get the recommended screening and several years later he was diagnosed with advanced colon cancer.

Lisa believes that if more people had access to Medicaid, the rate of colon cancer would significantly decrease, preventing unnecessary pain, suffering and expensive cancer treatments.

“People want to take care of themselves.”



## Jennifer Shreveport, LA



*To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.*

Jennifer is the project coordinator for Partners in Wellness, a cancer screening program in Shreveport.

Before Medicaid expansion, the majority of the patients screened by Partners in Wellness were uninsured. Most lived in rural areas where jobs with health insurance benefits were, and still are, difficult to find. If they received a test result that required follow-up, some patients couldn't get the treatments and care they needed.

"Since expansion, about 90 percent of the patients we see are covered by Medicaid. Most of these people never had insurance before. Once they realize that their Medicaid coverage gives them choices, we can start to educate them on how to handle their cancer diagnosis or chronic illness," Jennifer said.

**"Since expansion, about 90 percent of the patients we see are covered by Medicaid."**





## **Brandon** Savannah, GA

“Patients without coverage might have to figure out how to pay for insulin or how to pay their rent – they often can’t do both.”



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

## **Dr. Cole** Stuart, VA

“With Medicaid expansion, I think we’ll have a lot of people who will now have access to care who will be able to improve their lives.”



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.



## **Roxanne** Durham, NC

“ Medicaid helps people get needed care. It helps for early detection of chronic diseases, so you can catch things earlier. And that’s cheaper and more efficient care than when you go to the ER.”

To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

## **Stephanie** Kinston, NC

“ At our clinic we think a lot about the word ‘quality.’ Quality of care. Quality of health. Quality of life. Medicaid was created to provide that quality to those without the resources to access it otherwise.”



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

# Community

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Medicaid strengthens our community by helping families and children access the care they need to succeed at work, school and beyond.

## Nora Fort Payne, AL



*To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.*

When Nora was born with trisomy 13, her family was told she would only have a 10 percent chance of living past her first birthday. But Nora recently celebrated her 2nd birthday thanks in part to the care she received from Medicaid.

Although Nora's parents both work full-time and have private insurance, they quickly became overwhelmed by the co-payments and deductibles from Nora's numerous doctor visits, medicines and surgeries. When their insurance refused to cover monthly \$2,000 immunity shots before Nora's heart surgery, Nora's mom, Katie, applied to and was approved for Medicaid which has helped Nora thrive.



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*States have the option to offer additional coverage for children with severe disabilities through Medicaid 1915(b) waivers.*

## Gwyneth Bastrop, LA



To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

Gwyneth is an ambitious 18-year-old with an impressive list of extracurricular activities and leadership roles. She is her high school valedictorian, and this fall she will be enrolled in Louisiana Tech's honors program. Later, she plans to go to medical school to become a neurosurgeon.

Gwyneth was raised by her retired grandmother. Without Medicaid, Gwyneth wouldn't have access to health insurance. Medicaid has helped Gwyneth stay healthy, and get the care she needs to thrive in school.



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*Health insurance coverage is available to children in low-income families through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in all states. Eligibility varies by state based on age and income level. In Louisiana in 2019, children in a family of four are eligible for Medicaid if the household income is less than \$3,047 per month.*

## Ryan Chapel Hill, NC



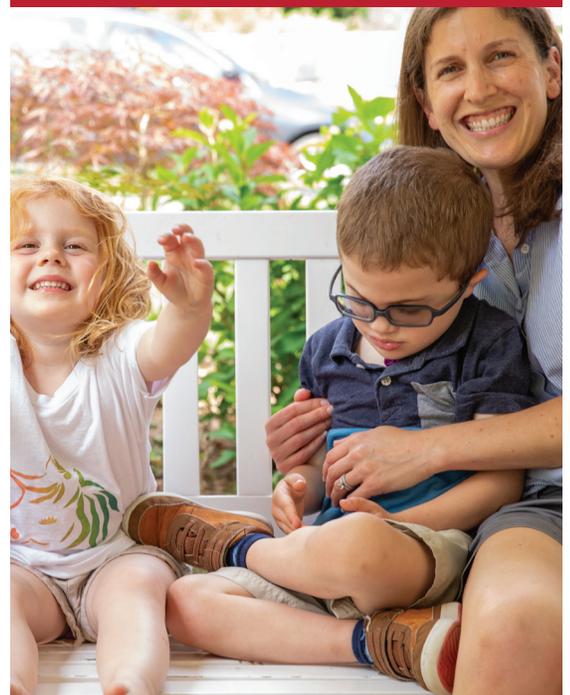
*To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.*

Ryan, now 6 years old, was born with a genetic disorder called CHARGE syndrome. The syndrome is rare and complex, and it requires Ryan to have feeding and tracheostomy tubes and consistent nursing care.

Ryan's family has private insurance, but the coverage isn't sufficient for someone with needs as significant as Ryan's. Fortunately, Ryan qualifies to have Medicaid as his secondary insurance, which covers what the private insurance company would not: replacement feeding tubes, home modifications like a generator for Ryan's ventilator and necessary additional nursing hours.

"We're not wanting a blank check," Ryan's mom, Melissa, said. "We're just wanting the care he needs."

**"We're just wanting the care he needs."**





**Linda** Chapel Hill, NC

“I just can’t say enough about the quality of care my daughter receives. Without Medicaid, she wouldn’t be here. It’s allowed her to live a fulfilling life in her community.”

To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

**Elias** Fort Payne, AL

“Medicaid saves lives.  
It saves kids’ lives.  
It saved my son’s life.”



To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

# Individual

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Medicaid allows our friends and neighbors to take care of themselves and their families, pay their bills and go to work.



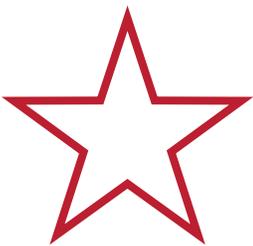
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In 2005, Flecia was working full-time as a massage therapist. At the time she was healthy and covered by a private health insurance plan.

That December, Flecia was diagnosed with a very aggressive type of breast cancer. She quickly found out that not only would it be impossible for her to pay her \$10,000 deductible, but many of the medications and

treatments she would need to fight her cancer diagnosis would not be covered by her insurance plan.

So Flecia applied for Medicaid and gained eligibility through the state's breast and cervical cancer treatment program. She is beyond grateful for the health care coverage and cancer treatment care that Medicaid offered: "If it hadn't been for Medicaid, I wouldn't be here today."



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*Low-income uninsured and underinsured women are provided access to breast and cervical cancer screening and early detection services through the federally funded Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (BCCEDP). Women screened and diagnosed through BCCEDP are provided a pathway to comprehensive health care and cancer treatment services through their state Medicaid program. In Georgia, the income limit in 2019 to qualify for an individual is \$2,082 per month.*

## Sandy Mobile, AL



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

Sandy worked her whole life. But when she ripped the tendons in her back, she realized the years of hard work had taken a toll on her body, and after her back injury she had several other health conditions that worsened.

After five hospital visits in one year, she knew she needed a higher level of support. Fortunately, she found Mercy LIFE of Alabama, a Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) that combines funding from Medicaid and Medicare to provide comprehensive care to low-income older adults.

“If not for Mercy LIFE and Medicaid, I’d be dead. I know that,” said Sandy. Thanks to Medicaid and the care she has been able to receive, Sandy hasn’t been back to the hospital once.

“If not for  
Mercy LIFE  
and Medicaid,  
I’d be dead.”



## Jamila Baton Rouge, LA



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

During the summer of 2017, Jamila was six months pregnant and finishing up a fellowship program that provided health insurance. While she had a new job lined up, her new health insurance wouldn't kick in right away. Unfortunately, Jamila's due date fell right in the middle of this gap. Jamila knew she couldn't afford to have a baby without insurance.

Jamila applied for Medicaid, and she was relieved when she found out she was eligible for coverage. Medicaid allowed her to keep up with her remaining prenatal visits and deliver her baby.

Jamila and her son are now insured through her job. Jamila feels extremely grateful for Medicaid: "Medicaid has been a lifesaver and it helped me have peace of mind when I was transitioning into becoming a mom in between jobs."



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*Low-income women are eligible for coverage through state Medicaid programs during pregnancy. This coverage typically ends 60 days after delivery. Income limits for pregnant women vary by state, but for a single mom having her first child in Louisiana the income limit is \$1,945 per month in 2019.*

## Gloria Petersburg, VA



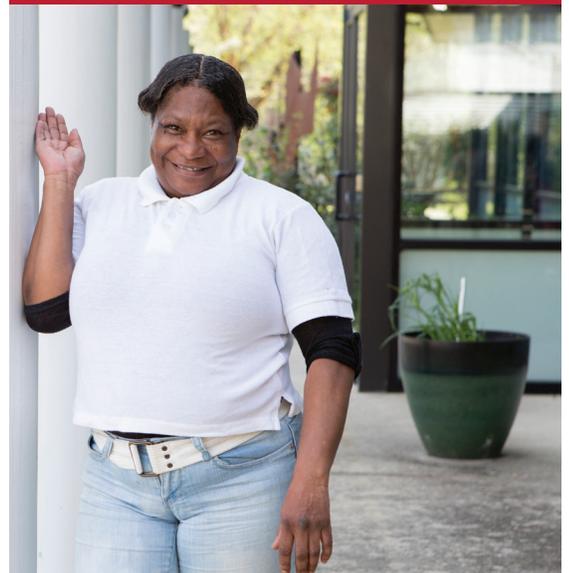
*To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.*

Gloria has struggled for a long time with her health. She was born with a heart murmur, blood pressure issues, constant bronchitis and was recently diagnosed with glaucoma and cataracts that are getting worse. For years she relied upon emergency care at a hospital because she was uninsured and wasn't able to access the medications or care she needed to manage her conditions.

But when Virginia expanded its Medicaid program, Gloria was able to get the care she needed. She finally had access to the blood pressure medications and inhalers that could keep her out of the hospital.

And now that she has Medicaid, she can treat her eye conditions. "Because of Medicaid, I'll be able to have surgery and see again," she said.

**“Because of Medicaid, I'll be able to have surgery and see again.”**





## **Aleta** Mobile, AL

“Medicaid helps keep our patients out of nursing homes. It saves and extends the lives of so many of our patients.”



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

## **Debbie** Merriam, KS

“Without Medicaid, I wouldn’t be here. I wouldn’t have been able to get the treatments I needed. Medicaid saved my life.”



To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.



**Jamie** Mobile, AL

“I don’t think I would have made it through my breast cancer treatments without this program. Medicaid saved my life.”



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

**Sylvia** Petersburg, VA

“When they told me I was approved, I couldn’t believe it. But I knew it was going to be okay. Because of Medicaid, I would be able to get what I needed.”



To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.



*Under the Affordable Care Act, 35 states and the District of Columbia have expanded Medicaid to provide affordable coverage to adults with low incomes. In these states, individuals earning less than \$1,500 a month are eligible for health insurance coverage through Medicaid.*

# Coverage Gap

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Approximately 2.5 million adults nationwide do not have affordable health insurance options—they make too much to qualify for Medicaid, work in jobs that don't offer benefits or don't earn enough to get a subsidy to lower the cost of private health coverage. Individuals in this “coverage gap” face tough choices to take care of themselves and their families. Research also shows that they are more likely than those with health insurance to be diagnosed with cancer at a later stage, when it is more costly to treat, and patients are less likely to survive. Medicaid expansion would allow these individuals to access health insurance so they could take better care of themselves and their families.

## Gabriel Kansas City, KS



*To learn more, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.*

For the last 20 years, Gabriel worked with adults with developmental disabilities to help them live as independently as possible. But in the summer of 2018, Gabriel injured his back. In intense and constant pain, Gabriel could no longer continue to work, which meant he also lost his health insurance.

If Kansas had expanded Medicaid, Gabriel would have access to health insurance. But right now, he is not eligible.

If Gabriel had health insurance, he would get surgery to repair his back and he would be able to go back to work. “I’d like to get back to being more independent,” he said.



*As of July 2019, there are 15 states that continue to deny millions of low-income adults access to affordable health insurance coverage through Medicaid. An estimated 2.5 million adults, living below the poverty line, do not have access to any affordable insurance options.*

## Elaine Fort Payne, AL



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

When her husband was injured and lost his factory job, Elaine's family was suddenly down to one income and without private insurance.

Elaine and her husband remain uninsured and they are afraid of what would happen if either of them got sick. Her employer does not offer health insurance and she makes too much money to qualify for Alabama's Medicaid program, but also too little to qualify for tax credits to help them afford private health insurance. Thankfully their children are covered by Medicaid.

She wishes she and her husband had peace of mind for themselves. "To be able to provide for your kids, you need to keep yourself going as well. You just have to save and choose what ailments you can look into. That's something people take for granted when you are covered."

“To be able to provide for your kids, you need to keep yourself going as well.”



## Cristy Kinston, NC



 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

Cristy was a kind, loving and hard-working mother of three children who worked full time at a restaurant.

When Cristy was in her early 30s, she began feeling strange and overly tired. She was uninsured because she made more than the \$744 per month Medicaid limit for a parent caring for three children in North Carolina, and didn't have insurance through her job, so she paid out of pocket to see a doctor who diagnosed her with congestive heart failure. They told her she needed to get an internal defibrillator to keep her heart healthy.

Cristy tried to get the care she needed but couldn't afford treatment without health insurance.

When Cristy was just 36 years old, she died in her sleep of a heart attack. Her youngest son was sleeping next to her that night. "It's not right," her mother, Cornelia, said. "I buried my daughter when she was just 36 because she didn't have access to treatment."

“It’s not right. I buried my daughter when she was just 36 because she didn’t have access to treatment.”





 To watch full video, align the camera app on your iPhone or Android with the QR code and follow the pop-up link.

In her sophomore year at college, Marcillene, now a high school physics teacher, began experiencing strange symptoms: her speech became slurred and she would sometimes fall while walking.

Marcillene didn't qualify for Medicaid and wasn't making enough money to qualify for assistance to buy private insurance, even though she was working three jobs. Without health insurance, it took a year for Marcillene to save up enough money to see a neurologist and get the recommended MRI. That's when she was diagnosed with MS.

If Marcillene had access to insurance, she would have started medications a year earlier, which would have slowed the progression of the disease. "I have a nephew I love," she said. "I might've been able to run around the playground with him today instead of watch him from a bench."

“I might’ve been able to run around the playground with my nephew today instead of watch him from a bench.”



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