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## **CMS Approves Medicaid Waiver that Will Limit Health Coverage for Lung Disease Patients in Wisconsin**

CHICAGO, IL (October 31, 2018) – Statement of Harold P. Wimmer, National President and CEO of the American Lung Association, in response to CMS' approval of the Wisconsin Medicaid 1115 demonstration project waiver, "BadgerCare Reform," which includes a work requirement for enrollees and increased premiums for smokers in the Medicaid program:

"The American Lung Association is deeply disappointed in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) approval of Wisconsin's 1115 waiver. This waiver jeopardizes access to healthcare for many Wisconsin residents. The waiver includes a work requirement for low-income Medicaid enrollees, even though a similar program in Arkansas has led 8,462 Medicaid enrollees to lose their health coverage within the first five months of implementation. Families who are struggling to get by shouldn't have to face the administrative burden of proving that they meet these requirements in order to keep their healthcare coverage. Additionally, Wisconsin has not expanded its Medicaid program, giving this waiver the unfortunate distinction of being the first waiver with a work requirement for the non-expansion population, a particularly vulnerable group.

"The BadgerCare Reform waiver also will charge smokers more in premiums than their non-smoking counterparts. This policy is misguided. Medicaid enrollees smoke at a rate that is over twice as high as the individuals with private insurance. While the Lung Association encourages all smokers to quit, smoking is a serious addiction, and charging smokers more for health coverage has not been proven effective in helping smokers quit. In fact, studies have suggested that these policies encourage smokers to forgo health coverage.

"The American Lung Association believes everyone should have quality, affordable health coverage, including Medicaid enrollees. The policies approved by CMS today does not further that goal."

For media interested in speaking with an expert about Medicaid or access to healthcare, contact Allison MacMunn at the American Lung Association at [Media@Lung.org](mailto:Media@Lung.org) or 312-801-7628.

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### **About the American Lung Association**

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease, through research, education and advocacy. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to improve the air we breathe; to reduce the burden of lung disease on individuals and their families; and to eliminate tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases. For more information about the American Lung Association, a holder of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Guide Seal, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit: [Lung.org](http://Lung.org).

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