

Guest Speaker

Stephen Fitton

Director, Michigan Medicaid



Stephen Fitton has been serving as the Director of Michigan's Medicaid program since 2008. In this capacity, he oversees a health care program that serves 1.9 million of Michigan's low income citizens, 40% of whom are children, with an annual budget of approximately \$12 billion. Medicaid arranges and pays for a broad range of health care services including physician, hospital, and long term care. Michigan's Medicaid program has a staff of over 350 people. Before assuming the Director's role, Mr. Fitton directed the Bureau of Medicaid Policy and Actuarial Services focusing on a range of policy and financing issues.

The Michigan Medicaid Health Care Program provides medical and health-related assistance to low-income individuals and families who have no medical insurance or inadequate medical insurance. Generally, the program serves: children; persons aged 65 or older; blind or permanently disabled persons; members of families with dependent children; children in foster care homes; pregnant women; and individuals under age 21 in psychiatric hospitals. The Michigan Medicaid program manages contracts so that citizens who are granted eligibility can be connected with services. Michigan Medicaid contracts with providers and service delivery organizations so that care is accessible for Medicaid enrollees.

Mr. Fitton's office administers the Michigan Medicaid State Plan, which is an agreement between the state and federal government that identifies health care service coverages, reimbursement, and eligibility policies in effect under Michigan Medicaid. It is the basis for the federal government (CMS/HHS) to pay its federal financial participation (FFP) for the program's operation.

Mr. Fitton has worked in health policy and budget in Michigan state government for over thirty-five years. He began work in Medicaid Policy in the early 1970's. The majority of his experience prior to Medicaid was in the Children with Special Health Care Needs program. Experience in the Children with Special Health Care Needs program was valuable to Mr. Fitton in a number of ways; it required an understanding of the health service delivery system and its financing, it presented a public health perspective especially as it relates to prevention, and it helped him develop a sensitivity to the challenges faced by families of children with special health needs, all of which informed his roles in Medicaid.