

Hospital

Clinics

Emergency Room
Level III Trauma

Urgent Care

Home Health

Assisted Living



Letter to Editor: Hospital Leaders Talk Medicare/Medicaid Cuts

Dear Editor,

As part of negotiations for an increase in the debt ceiling, some in Congress have advocated cutting \$14 billion dollars in Medicare that supports rural hospitals. This is in addition to hundreds of millions of dollars in cuts in Medicare and Medicaid we are already facing, due to recent policy changes.

Such drastic cuts would completely decimate the rural health care system, and harm rural seniors' ability to access care – and seniors are among the most vulnerable people in our community. In fact, nationally, rural seniors, per capita, are older, poorer and sicker than senior citizens in urban areas.

Our U.S. Senators Kohl and Johnson, along with Representative Ron Kind must not support these cuts.

Rural hospitals are vital access points for local residents and seniors to get timely and quality care. Devastating cuts like those proposed will force rural hospitals to limit services, or worse, close their doors. If a rural hospital closes, patients suffer, and so does the rural economy.

Nationally, twenty percent of Americans live in rural communities, yet only five percent of federal Medicare spending goes to support rural hospitals. I call that a sound taxpayer investment.

To break this down to a local level, approximately 55% of our total revenue comes from patients whose primary insurance coverage is Medicare and Medicaid (January – June, 2011). We employ 241 people, indirectly support many other jobs in our community, and add millions of dollars to the local economy

Rural Wisconsin can't afford these kinds of cuts to our rural health care system. Tell our members of Congress not to harm rural seniors and not to support these cuts.

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