



ST. STEPHEN'S HUMAN SERVICES

7/30/2009

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Alliance
of the Streets

Employment &
Family Services

Free Store

Housing Services

Human Rights

Kateri Residence

Kids Resiliency
Education

Programs to End
Long-term
Homelessness

Shelter

Street Outreach

**Our mission
is to end
homelessness.**

General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) is a state-run healthcare program that covers poor single adults who make less than \$8,123/yr. GAMC cuts will devastate people who depend on this program for healthcare. When GAMC is cut, people won't stop getting sick, having accidents, or needing prescription medications. When they go to the emergency room or have hospital stays and don't have coverage to pay for it, those who do have healthcare will likely see their premiums increase to cover the costs.

Despite what Governor Pawlenty states, Minnesota Care (MN Care) is not an acceptable substitute for GAMC. It will leave people uninsured or underinsured for the following reasons:

- **The MN Care application can take 3-4 months.** During this time, hospital visits, co-pays for prescriptions, drug/alcohol treatment, and other healthcare bills are not covered. This will place many people at high risk because they won't be able to get drugs to cover life-threatening illnesses including diabetes, cancer, or anti-psychotic drugs.

- **Newly unemployed people won't be covered for 4 months.** If someone gets laid off their job and loses their healthcare benefits, they must be uninsured for 4 months before MN Care will cover them. Under GAMC, someone can get coverage from the day they sign-up for it.

- **MN Care co-pays are higher than GAMC co-pays.** On GAMC, the maximum out of pocket co-pay total each month is \$12, and you cannot be denied service if you can't pay. On MN Care, there are no out-of-pocket limits, and if you can't pay twice, your provider may refuse to serve you. People who are unemployed or waiting for Social Security Disability insurance have no way to cover the costs of multiple prescriptions.

- **MN Care coverage is limited for hospital stays.** MN Care covers the first \$10,000 of hospital stays, but patients are required to cover costs after that. An average 1-week stay at Hennepin County Medical Center costs upwards of \$23,000. (www.mnhospitalpricecheck.org).

- **Residency requirements.** To be eligible for MN Care you must have been a resident of Minnesota for 6 months. For GAMC the residency requirement is only 1 month. This is another gap that will cause people to fall through the cracks if GAMC is cut.

To see video testimonies from people on GAMC please go to:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/ststephensmpls09>