

Health Care Reform Review Committee
January 19, 2016
Dan Hannaher, Executive Director HPC

Chairman Keiser, and members of the Health Care Reform Review Committee, thank you for this opportunity. For the record, my name is Dan Hannaher and I am the Executive Director of the Health Policy Consortium.

Medicaid Expansion has made it possible for over 19,000 North Dakotans to be covered by health insurance that were previously uninsured. This is a significant increase in the number of insureds, now protected and receiving medical care when needed.

In the past many of these patients were unable to afford medical treatment, resulting in extensive bad debt for providers. And the treatment they received was routinely in the Emergency Room, rather than through a primary care setting, resulting often in a cycle of treating the next emergent need, instead of a continuum of care experience that could improve their health.

Thus, having more covered patients keeps them healthier, and the provider systems can manage patient care more appropriately, while reducing costs.

The Health Policy Consortium is attempting to quantify the financial advantages this presents to the state and to the medical provider system in the four largest public hospitals in the state, Trinity in Minot, Altru in Grand Forks, Sanford in Fargo and Sanford in Bismarck.

We are continuing to gather the data but it has been a bit more complex than we initially thought because there are a number of factors that need to be examined before reaching accurate conclusions. Those factors also vary from hospital to hospital and community to community. We hope to have valuable and important information to share with you soon, hopefully at the committee's next meeting.