

2018

Candidate Questionnaire



Close the Gap Idaho encourages constituents, the media and organizations to actively engage candidates for elected office on health care related issues. The below list of questions for candidates are focused on the importance of Idaho Medicaid and health coverage in general. These questions can be utilized with candidate's in-person, over email, in letters to the editor, and at public forums.

- 1. A citizen led effort to collect over 70,000 signatures from across the state has resulted in a ballot measure to expand Medicaid in Idaho and provide affordable access to health care for approximately 62,000 mostly working Idahoans.**
 - If elected, will you support the will of the voters?
 - How will you support implementation of the ballot initiative if it passes?
- 2. Idaho Medicaid provides important health coverage for vulnerable Idahoans such as low-income children, people with disabilities and pregnant women. Idaho's Medicaid program is also incredibly cost-effective. Approximately 97% of Idaho's investment in Medicaid is spent on health services that directly help Idahoans.**
 - What will you do to continue to ensure that Idahoans who receive health care from Medicaid will have access to that care in the future?
- 3. Studies show that Medicaid helps lift people out of poverty, particularly among adults living with disabilities, children, and seniors. However, there are efforts to put red tape and barriers between people and the health coverage that keeps them upwardly mobile.**
 - If elected, how will you prioritize the financial stability of your constituents by protecting health coverage through Idaho's Medicaid program.
- 4. Rural areas in Idaho often have less access to health care services and many Idahoans, especially children, in rural areas are insured by Medicaid.**
 - What would be the best way to broaden access to health coverage for rural Idahoans?
- 5. Congress continues to consider proposals that would slash federal Medicaid funds. This would shift the cost of necessary health care services for Idahoans on Medicaid to our state.**
 - Will you protect Idaho and the low-income seniors, Idahoans living with disabilities, and children who rely on the program by opposing/continuing to oppose cuts and caps to Medicaid?

- 6. One in four Idahoans suffer from some form of mental illness. Accidental drug-related deaths have doubled in the last five years in our state and suicide rates have consistently outpaced national trends, ranking among the highest of all states for the last ten years. Approximately 55% of adolescents and adults with behavioral health needs receive no treatment.**
- What are your ideas for broadening access to mental health and substance use treatment in Idaho?
- 7. Since 2014, 50,597 more Idahoans gained health coverage. When healthcare is more affordable, more people are likely to be insured. With premiums set to rise in the next few years, these gains are in jeopardy.**
- If elected, how will you maintain and improve healthcare coverage affordability in Idaho?
- 8. Approximately 673,200 Idahoans have pre-existing conditions. Currently, health insurance companies cannot charge people with health conditions more for their health insurance.**
- If elected, would you work to maintain protections for Idahoans with pre-existing conditions?
- 9. Since the establishment of the Your Health Idaho insurance exchange in 2014, county indigent care funds and the state Catastrophic Healthcare Fund (CAT) have seen dramatic savings of over \$30 million annually.**
- What are your ideas for supporting continued reductions in indigent spending at the state and local level in Idaho?

