

LLS Advocates Helped North Carolina Expand Medicaid

The bipartisan deal will make 600,000+ North Carolinians newly eligible for lifesaving care, including cancer screenings and treatment.

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North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper just signed Medicaid expansion into law, following years of advocacy from LLS volunteers and staff.

Once it takes effect, the bipartisan deal will make 600,000+ North Carolinians newly eligible for lifesaving care, including cancer screenings and treatment.

For years, LLS has advocated for this change through both virtual and boots-on-the-ground advocacy efforts. Online advocates have sent hundreds of letters over the years, urging their policymakers to support expansion and ensure cancer patients can get treatment. In June 2022, LLS Office of Public Policy staff, along with volunteer advocates, gathered in the state capital in Raleigh to urge their lawmakers to expand Medicaid.

For one LLS advocate, the ask was deeply personal. When Michael Morgan was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia as a student, he withdrew from Appalachian State University to pursue treatment—and was left without health insurance. By enrolling in Medicaid, he was able to get the lifesaving care he needed.

“Without Medicaid coverage, I would have considered forgoing treatment, and living out the few days I had left, due to the financial burden it would have placed on my family,” [he says](#).

Michael personally urged his representative – a longtime opponent of Medicaid expansion -- to support Medicaid expansion. That representative changed his mind, ultimately throwing his support behind Medicaid, shortly after that fateful meeting.

Michael was also [interviewed by Raleigh’s local CBS-17 News](#) while attending LLS’s lobby day in 2022, and [again this spring](#), shortly after the deal was announced. LLS and advocates were also featured in [Axios Raleigh](#) and [WRAL News](#).

Medicaid is the country’s public health insurance program, providing health insurance to children, parents, pregnant mothers, individuals with disabilities and those with low incomes.

North Carolina is the first state legislature to expand Medicaid since Virginia in 2018, though some states, including South Dakota, Missouri, and Oklahoma recently expanded their Medicaid programs through ballot initiatives. Since the Affordable Care Act became law in 2010, most states expanded their Medicaid programs, allowing even more patients to access healthcare. But some states—including North Carolina—held out, jeopardizing many patients' ability to get healthcare.

By expanding Medicaid, people in North Carolina who earn less than 138% of the federal poverty level—\$18,754 for an individual or just over \$38,000 for a family of four—will now qualify for Medicaid coverage.

With just 10 states left to expand, LLS will continue to advocate for greater access to healthcare for all – regardless of where those patients live.

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<http://beta.docker.cancerhealth.com/article/lls-advocates-helped-north-carolina-expand-medicaid>