



Volume 15, No. 10

Tonight: Increasing clouds with a low of 62

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News

Efforts made to privatize Commerce Dept. and Medicaid

Published Thursday, April 18, 2013
by [Taylor Shaw](#)

RALEIGH — Days before making an announcement to privatize Medicaid, Gov. Pat McCrory introduced a plan to change the economic development in North Carolina.

Earlier this month, McCrory outlined a framework for Medicaid reform that he said will improve care, customer service and results for the young and the elderly, disabled, mentally ill and low-income families.

“Medicaid reform is long overdue and essential for the future health of North Carolina,” he said.

McCrory said “A Partnership for Healthy North Carolina” would provide more comprehensive care, improved customer service and a more predictable cost structure by using private service providers.

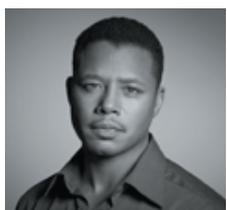
“My concern regarding these privatization measures is that they will run the risk of diverting taxpayer dollars to supplement private companies and their stakeholders,” said Rep. Larry Hall (D-Durham) in his monthly e-newsletter.

Eight weeks ago, a Request for Information was issued to providers, recipients and advocacy groups. Feedback was given to include in the reform process.

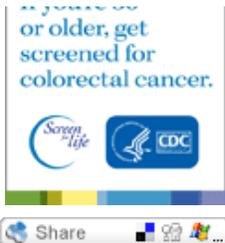
What Aldona Wos, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, calls “a system of comprehensive care,” the partnership will create several statewide Comprehensive Care Entities that will provide the framework to deliver care to Medicaid recipients. The CCE’s will conduct assessments to determine the most effective treatment for each recipient, and create a comprehensive care network of providers that will work together to provide customer service and care. The reform framework does not provide any reduction in needed services or make any changes to Medicaid eligibility.

DHHS officials will meet with lawmakers and stakeholders over the next few weeks to discuss the reform strategy and additional feedback.

McCrory visited Copland Fabrics in Burlington, N.C., April 9 to announce “Partnership for Prosperity,” a separate nonprofit



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corporation to handle economic development functions for the state, including small business development, entrepreneurship, international investment, import and export, and travel and tourism.

McCrorry said it would allow the state to develop jobs.

"We are going to unleash North Carolina's economic potential with a bold new approach to recruit and retain business," he said.

McCrorry will chair the board of directors that will manage the nonprofit and have governance of all recruitment and retention of activities. Eventually, McCrorry said fewer state dollars will be needed to run the programs currently operated by the N.C. Department of Commerce and several nonprofits receiving state funding.

"We have to be able to move faster, primarily in terms of job recruiting," N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker said. "Our economic development efforts must also recognize that one size does not fit all, and the economies of all communities are important to us."

The Commerce Department will develop a plan over the next 45 days for the public-private partnership that includes organizational structure, budget and cost projections, as well as a timeline for implementing the reform.

Bill Elmore, vice chairman of Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated, volunteered to lead efforts in the department's reconstructing over the next few months. The group will also be meeting and seeking input from various stakeholders in the economic development process.

"Whatever steps are taken, it is my hope that the administration's plan for reform will not limit N.C.'s patients access to health care or restrict any opportunities to generate programs that will strengthen and expand our workforce," Hall said.

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