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Analysts: Economy could affect La. Medicaid effort

- Advocate business staff
- Published: Feb 19, 2009 - UPDATED: 2 p.m.

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Louisiana's efforts to modify its Medicaid program and provide a form of private insurance to the poor will face challenges because of the nation's economic downturn, and particularly as Medicaid populations grow, according to managed-care marketing firm HealthLeaders-Interstudy.

The Louisiana plan is being reviewed by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The proposal will establish pilot managed-care programs in four regions.

"With dismal health outcomes and rising Medicaid costs, managed Medicaid is past due in Louisiana, though plans will likely face hurdles in the coming year because of the economic climate and growing demand," Jan Shuxteau, analyst with HealthLeaders-InterStudy, said in a press release. "However, once approved, the prospect of hundreds of thousands of covered lives will attract significant interest from managed-care organizations, particularly those that already have experience in the state-sponsored insurance sector."

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