



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH & WELFARE**

DIRK KEMPTHORNE – Governor  
KARL B. KURTZ – Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**PUBLIC INVITED TO VOICE OPINIONS ON GOVERNOR'S MEDICAID  
REFORM PROPOAL**

The public will get a chance the first week of January 2006 to weigh-in with thoughts, opinions and suggestions for Governor Dirk Kempthorne's proposal to reform Medicaid. Listening sessions are scheduled statewide on January 4, 5 & 6. Times and locations vary (see the attached schedule).

"We really need to hear all the ideas the public has about Medicaid reform," says Idaho Health and Welfare Director Karl Kurtz. "Governor Kempthorne's initiative is an effort to slow down double digit increases in Medicaid costs and still provide quality care. All states are faced with Medicaid programs that are not sustainable under the current system. The Governor's proposal eliminates the current "one size fits all" approach and builds a system focused on prevention and wellness, personal responsibility and simplified eligibility. This is unique to the nation. We have a lot of eyes on us right now, so the public's input is critical. Their taxes help pay for the important health care services Medicaid provides and it's their family, neighbors and friends who receive the services."

Medicaid is a program that pays for medical assistance for certain children and families with low incomes, individuals with disabilities, and the elderly. It is funded by the federal and state governments to assist states in providing medical acute and long term care assistance to those who meet a number of eligibility requirements.

**(more)**

Governor Kempthorne's Medicaid reform proposal would change Medicaid into three separate programs for these groups of eligible participants. Each program will have different policy goals and objectives based on the needs of those in each respective program.

A copy of the Proposed Modernization of Medicaid report is available at:

[www.modernizemedicaid.idaho.gov](http://www.modernizemedicaid.idaho.gov)

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(**Editors** : For more information please contact Ross Mason, Public Information Officer, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, 334-0693.)

**Medicaid Listening Sessions January 2006**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact</b>
1	January 5, 2006	4:00-6:00 pm	<b>Coeur d'Alene</b> Kootenai Medical Center Fox Auditorium-Rooms 3, 4, and 5	Michelle Britton 769-1515
2	January 5, 2006	4:00-6:00 pm	<b>Lewiston</b> Lewis-Clark State College-William Conference Center	David Reynolds 799-4338
3	January 5, 2006	4:00-6:00 pm	<b>Caldwell</b> Caldwell IDHW Office-Grand Teton/Sawtooth Meeting Rooms, 3402 Franklin Road	Randy Woods 455-7106
4	January 4, 2006	3:00-6:00 pm	<b>Boise</b> 1720 Westgate Drive, Suite D, Room 119	Kathleen Allyn 334-6747
5	January 6, 2005	3:00-6:00 pm	<b>Twin Falls</b> CSI-Taylor Building	John Hathaway 736-3020 x408
6	January 4, 2006	4:00-6:00 pm	<b>Pocatello</b> Department of Education-Building 62, Auditorium, 645 Martin Luther King Drive	Nick Arambarri 239-9280
7	January 5, 2006	3:00-5:00 pm	<b>Idaho Falls</b> Child Development Center 2475 Leslie Avenue	Tracey Sessions 528-5789