

Democrats and Republicans debate whether Obamacare is good for women

Democrats say real women are seeing savings, Republicans say all Ohioans are losing out

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Reporter: Jo Engles

Supporters of the Affordable Health Care Act, also known as Obamacare, say women, in particular, are benefitting from the new program. But Republicans say it's a bad deal for all Ohioans, regardless of gender.

Jenny Brodie job at Innovation Ohio is usually to study issues such as health care. But, in this case, she says she's an example of who will benefit when it comes to getting health-care coverage under the affordable health care act.

Saving women money...

Brodie has a heart condition that has made it hard for her to get health care coverage in the past.

"I tried to buy my own health insurance on the individual market and I was turned down by every company I contacted," she recalls. "The condition I have is an automatic rejection for most insurers, so in my attempt to be responsible and make sure I was covered, no one would cover me."

Brodie says Obamacare will ensure she and other people with pre-existing conditions can get insurance beginning in January. But Democratic State Rep. Kathleen Clyde of Kent says women don't have to wait until 2014 to reap the benefits of some of the changes.

"Since just the beginning of this month, many health plans now cover well-visits, gestational diabetes screening, domestic violence screening, breast feeding supplies and contraceptive services," she says.

Clyde says young women also have been able to stay on their parent's health insurance longer. And Stephanie Kight with Planned Parenthood of Ohio says the law no longer allows insurers to charge women more for health care.

"Women will no longer pay more in premiums to get less coverage," Kight says. "Our medications, including our birth control, will be covered as part of preventive health care as it should always have been."

Kight says it's time for Republicans to stop spreading misinformation about Obamacare and adds the Republican House of Representatives should quit the futile task of voting to repeal it, as it did for the 40th time last week.

Or hurting everyone?

But Matt Borges of the Ohio Republican Party says it's the Democrats who are playing politics with health care.

"This whole notion of it being good for women is only good for them when it politically expedient," Borges says. "They won't stand up for women when they actually should."

Borges says the Democrats are not being fair when it comes to the implementation of Obamacare either.

"It's odd to me that President Obama thinks it's OK to delay the employer mandate and do a big favor for big business but stick it to the little guy and still have the individual mandate remain."

Borges says the Affordable Care Act should be scrapped. And he says Republicans should be invited in to come up with a health-care solution to replace it.

"The best option for everyone involved is to go back to the drawing board."

But for right now, starting over does not appear likely. Democrats are hoping once the program is implemented, Ohioans will realize it provides them better health care coverage at a better price.

Audio:

<http://www.wksu.org/news/story/36479>