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Pay more, get less: Introducing Obamacare in Illinois

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By Benjamin Yount | Illinois Watchdog

SPRINGFIELD — At best, folks in **Illinois** looking for insurance on the **Obamacare** exchanges will pay a little bit more than they currently do for health insurance.

But while they'll be paying a little bit more, they'll be getting an awful lot less.

The state released the price for insurance premiums to be offered through the Obamacare exchanges starting Oct 1 and the numbers aren't pretty.

But that's not the message pushed by the Illinois chief executive.

"Illinois residents will be able to select a plan that is affordable and meets the healthcare needs of their families. The number and quality of affordable health plans that will be offered through the Illinois Marketplace is impressive," Gov. [Pat Quinn](#) [2] crowns in a statement.

Quinn goes on to brag that "Illinois' rates are lower than was predicted by HHS and lower than many other states."

Lower than expected does not mean low cost.

"People are going to pay about the same, or maybe a tiny bit less," [Robert Slayton](#) [3], an insurance analyst from **Naperville**, told **Illinois Watchdog**. "If you're going to a doctor, your co-pays are one thing. But the rest of the costs, that's another thing."

Slayton said the state is only releasing some of the information about the lowest cost plans.

Illinois proudly says a single, 25-year-old man in **Chicago** will pay about \$120 in monthly premiums. Slayton points out the state is silent about what prescriptions, co-pays, co-insurance, and deductibles will cost.

"The problem I have with (Obamacare), it's going to cost 40 percent to 60 percent of the population more money out of their pocket than what they are currently paying," Slayton said.

Slayton found health insurance plans that are available today with premiums close to Obamacare costs, but those plans come with \$10,000 to \$12,000 deductibles and out-of-pocket expenses that would cost customers thousands of dollars more.

"The typical person today has a gold level plan," Slayton explained, "which is 80/20 co-insurance, \$1,000 deductible up to a about a \$2,500 deductible."

But Illinois' new rates are only for bronze and silver level plans.

"Everybody is comparing apples to oranges," Slayton said, adding that Obamacare doesn't require all insurance plans to offer top-shelf insurance plans.



[1]

PREMIUMS VS CARE:
Illinois' low end
Obamacare premiums
are not outrageous.
Until you see what you
get.

In other words, you may not be able to keep your doctor or the health plan you currently have.

Quinn notes Obamacare will come with subsidies for most people buying insurance through the marketplace.

"Illinois will also have access to financial support to help pay for health insurance," Quinn said. "This means they have access to health coverage that meets their budget, keeps them healthy and gives them peace of mind."

But Slayton said health care that "meets your budget" is not the same as health care that covers your needs and doesn't break the bank.

Contact Benjamin Yount @BYount@Watchdog.org and find him on Twitter @BenYount.

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[1] Image: <http://watchdog.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2013/09/dollar-sign.jpg>

[2] Pat Quinn: http://ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/Pat_Quinn

[3] Robert Slayton: <http://www.slaytonins.com/HOME>

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