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(S.D.)- SD Hospital Executives Support Expanding Medicaid



By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 04/24/2013 04:53 PM

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) - South Dakota hospital executives say expanding the Medicaid program to provide health insurance to thousands of additional low-income people would reduce the amount of people unable to pay their bills for medical care.

Hospital officials say South Dakota hospitals last year were unable to collect about \$90 million from low-income patients. They told a state task force that hospitals charge people with private insurance more to offset losses in charity care.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard appointed the task force to study the advantages and disadvantages of expanding the Medicaid program to cover an estimated 48,000 additional people. The group will submit a report to the governor and the Legislature by Sept. 15.

The legislature this year accepted the governor's recommendation to delay a decision on expanding Medicaid.