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KANSAS CITY

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**MEDICAL SOCIETY**

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**Kansas City Medical Society**

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Kansas City Medical Society Endorses Medicaid Expansion in Kansas and Missouri**

KANSAS CITY – The Kansas City Medical Society, on behalf of its 3,400 physician members, announces its support of Medicaid expansion in Kansas and Missouri, and as the current legislative sessions draw to a close, calls on legislators to enact expansion in each state next year.

“The Kansas City Medical Society has identified Medicaid expansion as its number one priority,” said Mark D. Brady, MD, Medical Society president. “We believe Medicaid expansion is important for several reasons. First, patients can be treated sooner if insured, and the end cost is lower. Second, our community’s economy is directly linked to its citizens’ health. Third, it’s important that low-income people get the health care they need to keep working and taking care of their families.”

Physician members also are concerned that a major barrier to delivering care is health insurance or ability to afford health insurance. Uninsured patients end up getting sicker and needing more costly treatments than if they had been insured and received care sooner, they note.

Another physician concern is that some community hospitals in rural areas in both Kansas and Missouri are closing or in danger of closing. Dr. Brady said, “Medicaid expansion would assist some of these hospitals. These hospitals are key to access to care but also to creating jobs in their communities.”

The Kansas and Missouri Medicaid programs currently offer no coverage to childless adults and very low income eligibility limits for parents (19% FPL in Missouri and 33% FPL in Kansas). To put this into context, 19% FPL for a family of four is roughly \$4,500 annually.

“In addition, absent Medicaid expansion, the coverage system in both Missouri and Kansas has a large coverage gap that leaves hundreds of thousands of residents behind, because they make too much money to qualify for the current Medicaid program and too little for a subsidized marketplace plan,” Dr. Brady added.

Estimates show that if both Missouri and Kansas expand Medicaid, some 400,000 people would gain access to health insurance. “This would bring approximately \$325 million per year into our six-county area surrounding Kansas City for the health care of our neediest residents,” Dr. Brady said.

The Kansas City Medical Society, representing medical and osteopathic physicians in the greater Kansas City area, advances the practice of medicine to improve the health of all in greater Kansas City through leadership, advocacy and innovation. The Medical Society also operates the Wy Jo Care and Metro Care charitable care programs through the Kansas City Medical Society Foundation. The society website is [www.kcmedicine.org](http://www.kcmedicine.org); Facebook KCMedSociety; Twitter @KCMedSociety.

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