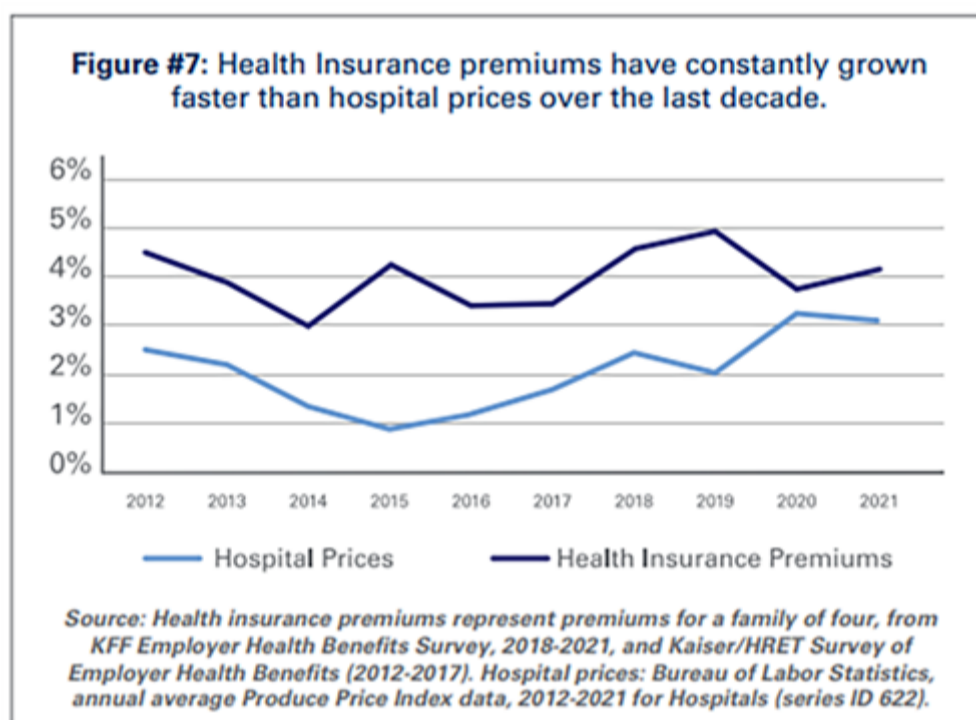# Wisconsin Health Care Ranked 8th Least Expensive in U.S.

Based on data from the Kaiser Family Foundation, a Forbes Advisor analysis found that Wisconsin is one of the least expensive states in the country for health care. Overall, Wisconsin ranked 42 out of 50 states—the eighth least expensive state in the country.

"Wisconsin has long been a leader in delivering value, a function of both quality and cost, to families and patients, while serving as a safety net for those with nowhere else to turn. We are pleased to see the Forbes analysis attempts to account for several factors that deliver value in the health care system, not a myopic focus on just one," said WHA President and CEO Borgerding.

The Forbes report doesn't take just one data point to draw its conclusions. Instead, the analysis uses 11 metrics including overall health care expenditures per capita, average premiums, cost sharing, and measures on whether cost inhibited accessing to care for doctors and mental health treatment.

Figure #7: Health Insurance premiums have constantly grown faster than hospital prices over the last decade.

Source: Health insurance premiums represent premiums for a family of four, from KFF Employer Health Benefits Survey, 2018-2021, and Kaiser/HRET Survey of Employer Health Benefits (2012-2017). Hospital prices: Bureau of Labor Statistics, annual average Produce Price Index data, 2012-2021 for Hospitals (series ID 622).

"Studies that focus solely on per-unit prices paint a misleading picture for policymakers and the public," continued Borgerding. "Several of these studies, including RAND, have significant shortcomings related to their sample size, fail to mention that Wisconsin hospitals are disproportionately underpaid in the Medicare program as they try to use Medicare as a benchmark and intentionally avoid the fact that hospitals serve millions of people on government programs that do not cover the cost of care."

Wisconsin's hospitals have faced unprecedented increases in labor, supply and pharmaceutical costs. Between 2019 and 2021, Wisconsin hospitals experienced a $580 million annual increase in labor costs and a $1.6 billion annual increase in the cost of supplies.

Nationally, hospitals have been striving to find the balance of keeping costs low while maintaining access to the high quality and most technologically advanced care. While hospital prices have only grown 2.1% annually between 2012 and 2021, the cost insurance companies are passing onto employers and families have increased at nearly double that rate.

According to Forbes, Wisconsin's health care expenses per person was $9,626, $2,100 per person less than the most expensive state in the nation, South Dakota.

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