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PUBLIC FORUM letters@staffordgroup.com

Medicaid should cover breast pumps

Dear Editor,

Babies deserve the best start. We need to do everything possible to make sure they get that start.

Breastfeeding mothers should have the same chance to continue giving their babies breast milk weather they are working, staying at home, have employer sponsored insurance or have Medicaid. Pumping breast milk allows many mothers to return to work but still provide all the health benefits of breastfeeding. It allows for mothers to express milk so that others can feed the baby.

Babies that are breastfed have fewer illnesses, such as asthma, respiratory and ear infections. For the mother, research shows that breastfeeding helps lower the risk of type 2 diabetes, breast and ovarian cancer and postpartum depression.

Mothers and babies should be given the same health benefits regardless of their income level. Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, breastfeeding supplies are covered without cost sharing. This same standard should be applied to Medicaid.

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