

## KHN Morning Briefing

Summaries of health policy coverage from major news organizations.

JUN 11, 2009

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### University of Michigan To Start Program That Would Give No-Cost, Discounted Medications To Employees, Dependents With Diabetes

The University of Michigan on July 1 will launch a two-year pilot program to provide no-cost or discounted medications to employees and dependents with diabetes, the [Detroit News](#) reports. The program, called MHealthy: Focus on Diabetes, will determine whether reduced copayments for medications for chronic conditions improved access to care and reduced complications. Under the program, more than 2,000 UM employees and dependents enrolled in the university health plan will receive no-cost generic medications for diabetes and related complications -- such as hypertension, heart and kidney problems and depression. In addition, UM will reduce copays for brand-name medications for diabetes and related complications by 25% to 50% and will distribute educational materials about how diabetes patients can manage their health. UM researchers will track medical and financial data to determine whether the program could reduce costs for other employers. UM President Mary Sue Coleman said, "We have all the makings of this perfect laboratory. We want to develop models that can be replicated in society at large." However, Michael Tanner, director of health and welfare studies at the [Cato Institute](#), said that previous studies indicate reduced copays might not lead to improved access to care. Language, cultural and educational issues can limit access to care, he said ([Terlep, Detroit News, 4/24](#)).

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