



# When a Chronic Condition Turns Critical

Paul G. - West Valley City, Utah



*“Medicaid was there to help save my life when I really needed it.”*

*That's Medicaid shares stories of people covered by Medicaid at critical points in their lives, underscoring the importance of stable health insurance coverage in building a Culture of Health.*

In 2007, **Paul** was busy juggling college and working part-time. He was uninsured because insurance companies considered his kidney disease a preexisting condition, before federal law prohibited such practices. Paul visited the doctor when he could, paying out-of-pocket, and hoped for the best.

That changed when an appointment revealed that his kidneys were failing and he needed an immediate transplant—the scariest day of his life. He couldn't afford surgery, but without it he would die. Paul's community raised more than \$13,000 dollars for him, but he was still tens of thousands of dollars short for the initial

surgery, plus the follow-up care and expensive immunosuppressant drugs he'd need for the rest of his life.

At his doctor's suggestion, Paul applied and was approved for Medicaid. His transplant surgery was successful, and he received the follow-up care needed to get back on his feet. A year and a half after surgery, Paul met his wife. They now have two sons and are privately insured.

“Medicaid gave me life,” Paul said. “Without it, I wouldn't have lived to meet my wife or had the opportunity to marry her. We wouldn't have our two beautiful boys.”