Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

When Work is Unstable

Linda Y. - Sherman, Connecticut

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.*

Following the economic downturn in 2008, cancer survivor **Linda** was routinely underemployed after working in a plant nursery for
years, and her husband lost his job as an automotive mechanic—as well as the health insurance that came with it.

After the Affordable Care Act expanded Medicaid in their state in 2010, Linda was able to sign up for health coverage through the program.

"I had so much anxiety about how to pay for health care. We were going through all our money, and we thought, 'this is not right,'" Linda says. "People shouldn't have to worry about being basically healthy."

Linda returned to school to get a degree that helped her find a job teaching urban agriculture in high school. Because the position does not provide benefits, Medicaid is necessary for her to get the preventive cancer screenings and fundamental care that she needs.

"Medicaid really provides such a baseline for society," Linda says. "It maintained my health so I was able to continue working."