

Changes in the Coverage Environment During COVID-19: State Strategies to Support Enrollment

Manatt Health and GMMB

October 30, 2020, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

STATE
Health & Value
STRATEGIES
COVID-19

A grantee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

About State Health and Value Strategies

State Health and Value Strategies (SHVS) assists states in their efforts to transform health and health care by providing targeted technical assistance to state officials and agencies. The program is a grantee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, led by staff at Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs. The program connects states with experts and peers to undertake health care transformation initiatives. By engaging state officials, the program provides lessons learned, highlights successful strategies, and brings together states with experts in the field. Learn more at www.shvs.org.

Questions? Email Heather Howard at heatherh@Princeton.edu.

*Support for this webinar was provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Foundation.*

Housekeeping Details

All participant lines are muted. If at any time you would like to submit a question, please use the Q&A box at the bottom right of your screen.

After the webinar, the slides and a recording will be available at **www.shvs.org**.

COVID-19 Resources for States

State Health and Value Strategies has created an accessible one-stop source of COVID-19 information for states at www.shvs.org/covid19/. The webpage is designed to support states seeking to make coverage and essential services available to all of their residents, especially high-risk and vulnerable people, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

About Manatt Health

Manatt Health, a division of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP, is an integrated legal and consulting practice with over 160 professionals in nine locations across the country. Manatt Health supports states, providers, and insurers with understanding and navigating the complex and rapidly evolving health care policy and regulatory landscape. Manatt Health brings deep subject matter expertise to its clients, helping them expand coverage, increase access, and create new ways of organizing, paying for, and delivering care. For more information, visit www.manatt.com/ManattHealth.aspx

About GMMB

GMMB is a full-service communications firm dedicated to creating real and lasting positive change in the world. We work on behalf of several of the world's largest foundations, leading public interest groups and trade associations, federal and state government agencies, and corporations. For more than 25 years, we have been on the front line of issue-based communications, earning a reputation for shaping public opinion by developing research-based communications strategies that achieve real results. For more information, visit www.gmmb.com

Overview

- **What is does Medicaid enrollment look like on the ground in states?**
 - Medicaid enrollment continues to grow well above pre-pandemic levels in nearly all states
 - This could accelerate in the coming months just as federal aid is set to expire
 - There is a growing need for Medicaid coverage, particularly given the pandemic and pent up demand for health care, but states will face pressure to cut Medicaid spending without additional federal support
- **How can state Medicaid Agencies and Marketplaces support consumers seeking new or transitioning coverage in the coming months, especially as the pandemic continues?**
 - Reinforce information about coverage options
 - Coordinate across state agencies and with key stakeholders
 - Utilize a range of direct-to-consumer approaches
 - Focus on equity in outreach



Agenda

- Changes in the Health Care Coverage Environment
- State Strategies to Support Enrollment
- Discussion

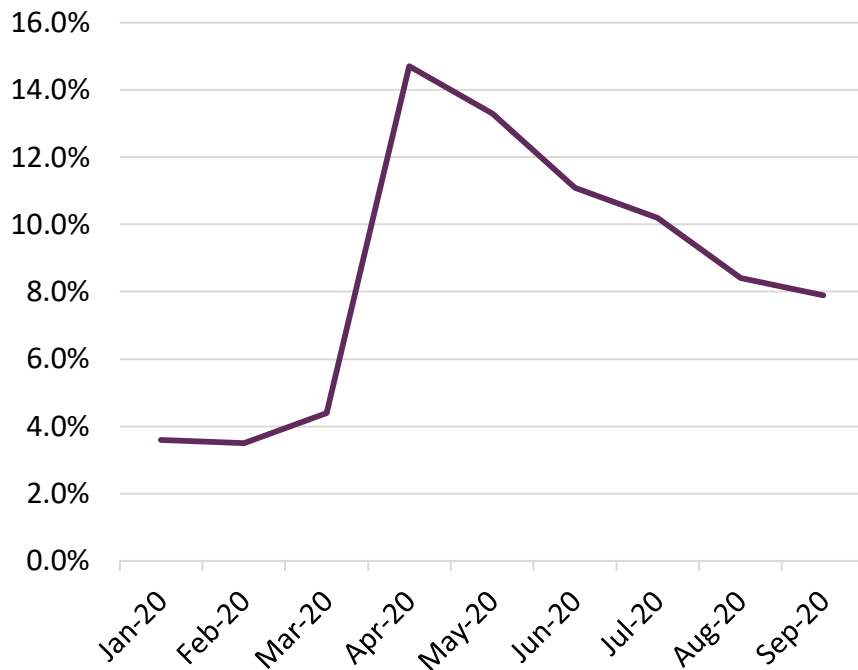


Changes in the Health Care Coverage Environment

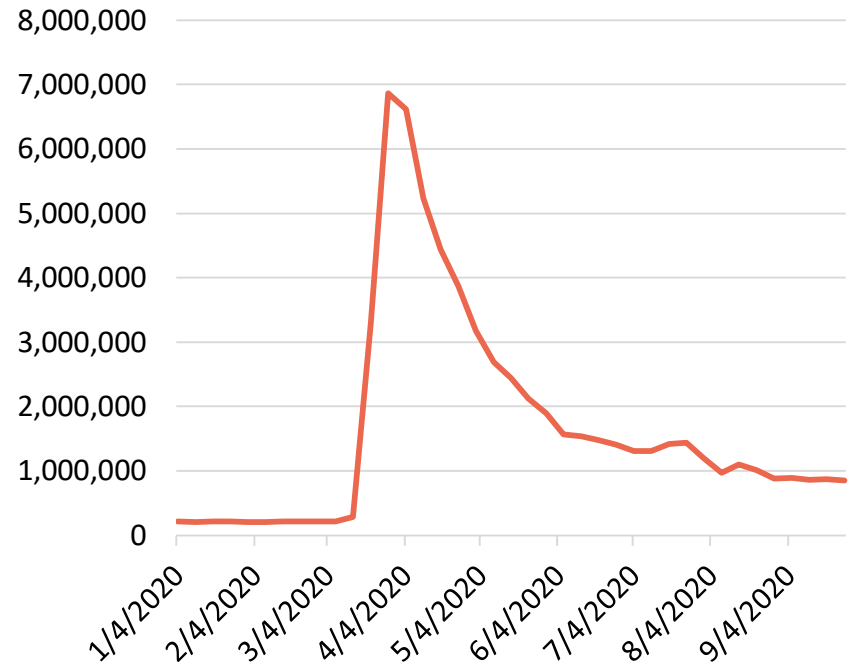
An Improved but Still Struggling Economy

While the economy has improved since the early days of the pandemic, unemployment remains substantially elevated relative to normal times

Civilian Unemployment Rate, 2020



Weekly Initial Unemployment Claims (Seasonally Adjusted), 2020



Sources: <https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims.asp>
<https://www.bls.gov/charts/employment-situation/civilian-unemployment-rate.htm>

Economic Picture Moving Forward is Uncertain

There are signs that the economic recovery may be stalling, and further stimulus from the federal government is not guaranteed

- The September jobs report suggested that recovery may be stalling
 - Nonfarm payrolls increased by only 661,000, compared to the 859,000 anticipated by economists
 - More than 700,000 people left the labor force and the share reporting permanent unemployment increased
- Prospects of additional near-term economic stimulus have faded (though this could change depending on the results of the election)

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

U.S. Job Gains Slow as More Layoffs Become Permanent

The New York Times

Job Gains Are Waning, a Blow to Economic Recovery

Payrolls grew last month, but permanent layoffs are rising, the labor force is contracting, and fewer women are employed.

Sources: <https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims.asp>

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-10-02/u-s-jobs-rise-less-than-forecast-as-economic-rebound-downshifts>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/business/economy/september-jobs-report.html>

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/september-jobs-report-unemployment-rate-2020-11601593020>

Downturns Typically Cause Growth in Medicaid Enrollment, but the Magnitude is Uncertain

While economic downturns typically lead to growth in Medicaid enrollment by decreasing access to employer coverage, not all individuals losing jobs will move straight into Medicaid

Influencers of Medicaid Enrollment Growth

- Share of individuals losing jobs that lose access to employer-sponsored insurance (ESI)
 - Many reported job losses represent “furloughs”, which often allow individuals to maintain employer-sponsored coverage (and many such individuals have been recalled by their employers as states have reopened their economies)
 - Some individuals may be able to access other coverage through a family member
- Share of individuals losing jobs who already had Medicaid coverage
- Share of individuals losing jobs and insurance who are actively seeking new coverage
 - Individuals may be foregoing routine care due to the pandemic
 - Some may also have expectations of returning to work in the near future

Estimated Change in Employer-Sponsored Coverage

- Bivens and Zipperer (EPI) estimate that **6.2 million workers lost access to ESI** between February and July 2020
- Fronstin and Woodbury (Commonwealth Fund) estimate that **7.7 million workers lost jobs with ESI** as of June 2020

Sources: <https://www.epi.org/publication/health-insurance-and-the-covid-19-shock/>
<https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2020/oct/how-many-lost-jobs-employer-coverage-pandemic>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/business/even-as-people-return-to-work-more-find-that-layoffs-are-permanent.html>

Families First Legislation is also Driving Medicaid Enrollment Growth

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act is also driving increased enrollment by reducing churn; however, the magnitude of these changes remains unclear

- Normally, a substantial share of Medicaid beneficiaries “churn” off of the program each month
- However, as a result of the Families First “continuous coverage” provision, those who would normally disenroll due to changes in circumstance, paperwork requirements, or other reasons, are now being kept enrolled in Medicaid
- Many of these individuals may have since regained eligibility (through job or income loss)

Public Law 116–127
116th Congress

An Act

Mar. 18, 2020
[H.R. 6201]

Making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
This Act may be cited as the “Families First Coronavirus Response Act”.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.
The table of contents is as follows:

DIVISION A—SECOND CORONAVIRUS PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

DIVISION B—NUTRITION WAIVERS

DIVISION C—EMERGENCY FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE EXPANSION ACT

DIVISION D—EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE STABILIZATION AND ACCESS ACT OF 2020

DIVISION E—EMERGENCY PAID SICK LEAVE ACT

DIVISION F—HEALTH PROVISIONS

DIVISION G—TAX CREDITS FOR PAID SICK AND PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

DIVISION H—BUDGETARY EFFECTS

¹ USC 1 note.

SEC. 3. REFERENCES.
Except as expressly provided otherwise, any reference to “this Act” contained in any division of this Act shall be treated as referring only to the provisions of that division.

DIVISION A—SECOND CORONAVIRUS PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

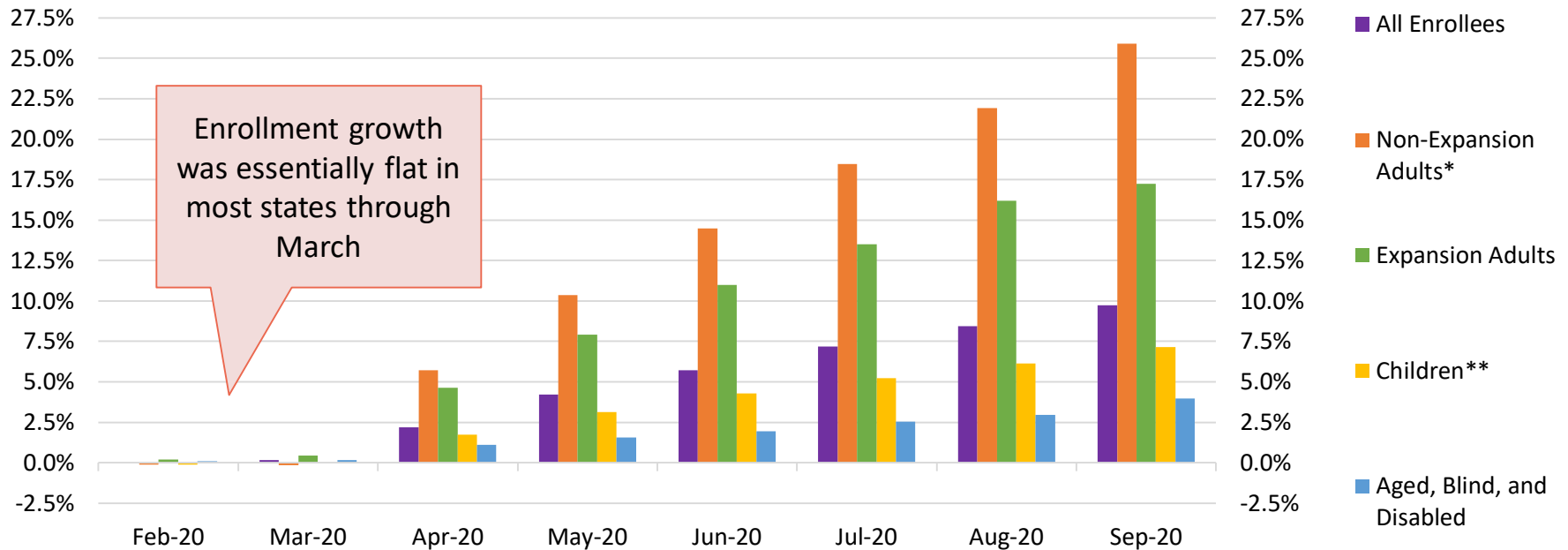
The following sums are hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes, namely:

Families First Coronavirus Response Act, 29 USC 2601 note.
Second Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020.

Medicaid Enrollment Growth Has Accelerated Substantially in Recent Months

Over the past several years, Medicaid enrollment was flat (or even declining) in many states, but as a result of the pandemic, growth accelerated dramatically beginning in April 2020

Median State Rate of Medicaid and CHIP Enrollment Growth by Eligibility Category, January 2020 through...



*E.g., parents, pregnant women

**Includes children enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP

Source: Manatt analysis of state Medicaid enrollment databases

Note: The number of states reporting data varies by month

Medicaid Enrollment Growth has been Fastest Among Non-aged, Non-disabled Adults

Growth has accelerated for children and aged, blind, and disabled groups but at a slower rate compared to non-aged, non-disabled adults



The **ACA expansion adult group** grew at a median rate of **18.2** percent from February through September, including 42.3 percent in Maine (through October) and 30.5 percent in Indiana (through August)



Non-expansion adult groups* also grew quickly – **in the median state, the growth rate was 25.8 percent** from February through September; as of the most recent month of reported data, at least six states – Florida, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah – had seen growth of over 30 percent.



Growth for **child groups**** was somewhat slower; from February through September, the **median state saw growth of 7.2 percent**



For **aged, blind, and disabled groups**, the **median state growth rate was the slowest of any group at 3.3 percent** from February through September

*E.g., parents, pregnant women

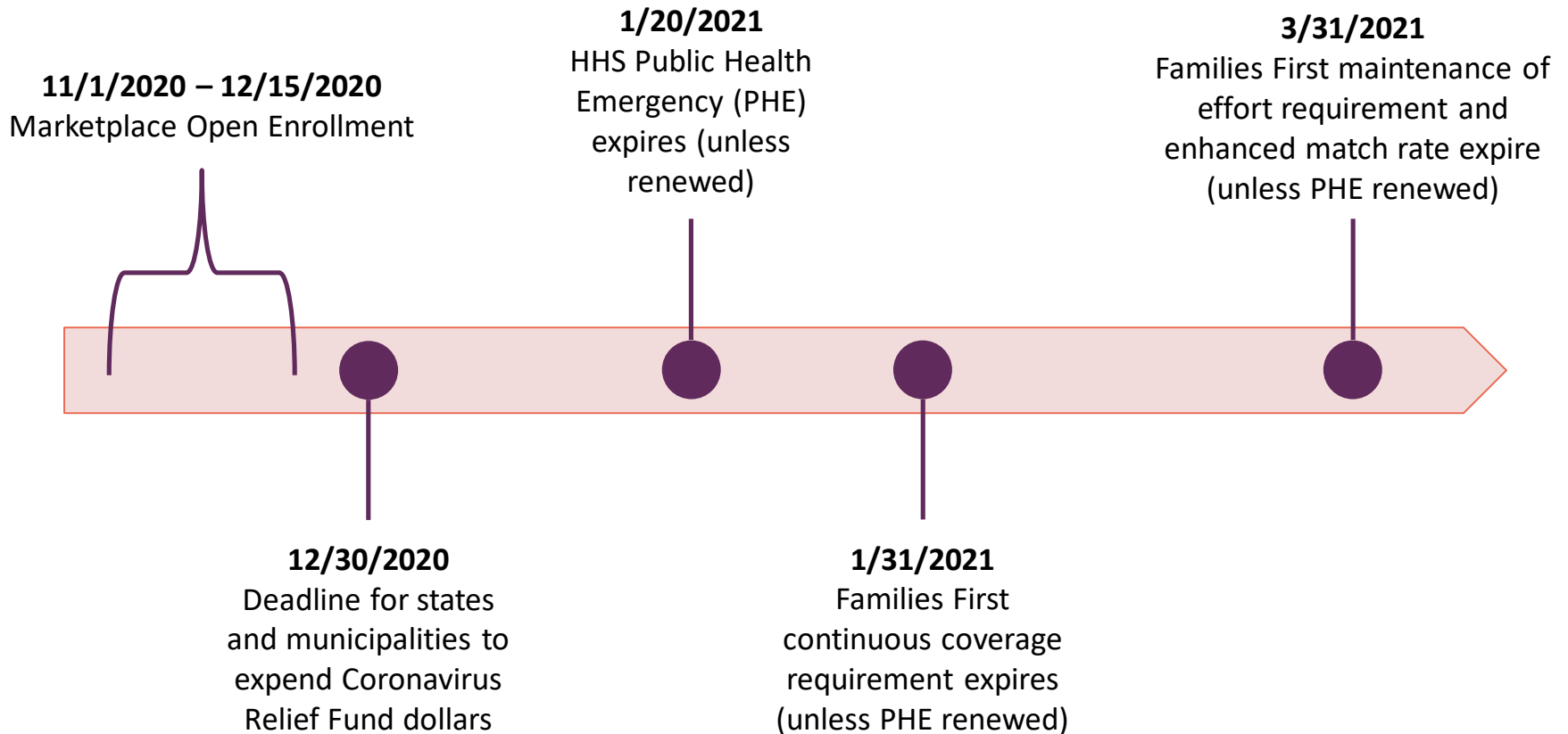
**Includes children enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP

Source: Manatt analysis of state Medicaid enrollment databases

Note: The number of states reporting data varies by month

What Should States Expect Going Forward?

As we approach the Marketplace Open Enrollment Period, states are likely to face an additional influx of Medicaid enrollees just as key fiscal relief provisions – including the Coronavirus Relief Fund and Families First enhanced match rate – could go away



Key Considerations for States

- Medicaid enrollment continues to grow well above pre-pandemic levels in nearly all states
- Medicaid and the Marketplace are likely to see an increase in both new applicants for coverage and transitions from Marketplace to Medicaid coverage during the upcoming Open Enrollment Period
- Enrollment growth could accelerate further if the economic recovery stalls or reverses course
- State governments are already grappling with significant shortfalls and many have already turned to cutting Medicaid to generate savings
- As COVID-19 infections surge across the country and as people begin to resume utilizing health care services at normal rates, it will be critical to protect existing coverage while also supporting consumers seeking or transitioning coverage in the coming months
- A further increase in the federal match rate would provide much needed relief to states and help them manage increased demand for Medicaid during the downturn

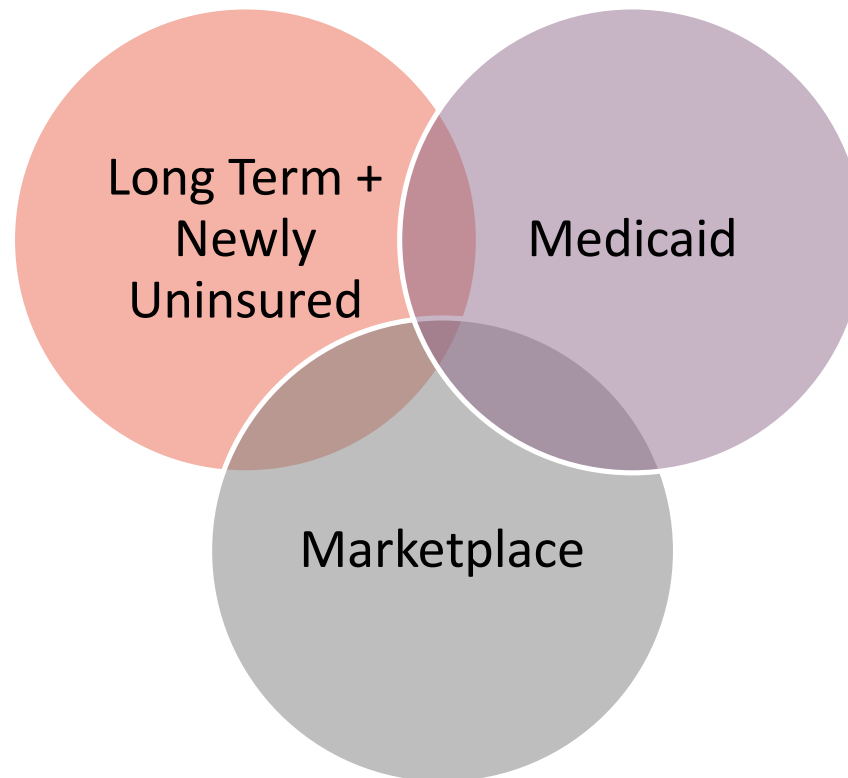
Source: <https://www.shvs.org/an-early-look-at-state-budget-actions-in-response-to-covid-19-and-the-impact-on-state-health-programs/>



State Strategies to Support Enrollment

Anticipate Coverage Churn and Communicate Open Door

Consumers are looking for coverage NOW and for 2021 and may not know about changes in program eligibility that may make new coverage options available to them



Messaging to Meet the Moment

In order to ensure that consumers are getting enrolled in right program and bolster a “no wrong door” approach, reinforce basic information about Medicaid and Marketplace coverage options

Affordability

- Financial help is available to lower the cost of a plan
- In some cases, there may be free or low-cost coverage options


Help Enrolling

- Free, safe help is available for consumers to explore their health coverage options


Need

- There when you need it
- Covers doctor’s visits, preventive care, prescriptions, etc.


Sample Messages




We understand that consumers are facing tough times and have lots of questions – we are here, open for business, and ready to help. Life is unpredictable right now – health insurance gives you the peace of mind knowing you’re covered if you get sick or injured.




Health insurance isn’t always out of reach – About 8 in 10 people qualify for financial help to lower the cost of their monthly premiums when they sign up through MARKETPLACE. In fact, plans are available for as low as XX/month. And, for those who qualify, health insurance through Medicaid is low-cost, or sometimes free.



If you’ve recently lost a job and your health insurance or had changes to your income, affordable and low-cost options may now be available. MARKETPLACE is the only place you can qualify for tax credits to lower the cost of a private health plan and you may now also qualify for Medicaid.



We’re here to help. We are taking your safety seriously and you can get free, safe help via web chat, over the phone, and by in-person appointments that follow public health guidelines.



And while open enrollment for coverage in 2021 starts November 1, we know that life has changed quickly for many people. If you’ve had a big life change and need health insurance now you may have options to enroll immediately. Visit [URL](#) or call MARKETPLACE/MEDICAID to find out more.

Insights from Maine



Meg Garratt-Reed
Senior Advisor for Coverage and
Affordability
Maine Department of Health and
Human Services

Interagency + Stakeholder Coordination

With unemployment still high, and consumers tapping into other supportive services, target efforts effectively

- Educate partners, health plans, and enrollment assisters about churn and eligibility impacts of income changes to ensure they are able to help consumers understand how to pick the best coverage option
- Ensure coordination between Marketplace and Medicaid by including information about both programs in communications to consumers
- Tap Unemployment agencies/Departments of Labor that may provide a touch point to newly uninsured consumers
- Promote availability of coverage and enrollment help through food banks, libraries, pharmacies and schools

Direct to Consumer Communication Strategies



SMS Messages



Email



Phone



In Person *(consistent with health and safety guidelines)*

Focusing on Equity in Outreach

Given the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color and existing health disparities, design efforts with equity in mind

- Establish and maintain meaningful partner relationships, which are critical for robust community outreach
- Embed community perspectives to help ensure a culturally-competent approach
- Develop community-informed messaging and materials to provide more equitable access to resources and coverage
- Continuously explore new outreach tactics and expand partner networks to stay relevant and engaged

Learn More:

[Addressing Equity through COVID-19 Response: Communications Approaches in States](#)



Insights from Washington, DC



Debra Curtis
**Senior Deputy Director for Policy and
Exchange Programs**
DC Health Benefit Exchange Authority

Discussion

The slides and a recording of the webinar will be available at www.shvs.org after the webinar

SHVS Resources

- [Tracking Medicaid Enrollment Growth During COVID-19 Databook and Overview](#) -- These resources include Medicaid enrollment data from over 40 states, and provides a comprehensive, detailed look at 2020 Medicaid enrollment trends to-date. The *Databook* provides enrollment detail by state across four eligibility categories: expansion adults, children (including those enrolled in CHIP), non-expansion adults, and aged, blind, and disabled individuals. It also compares enrollment trends across expansion and non-expansion states.
- [Collaborating to Connect Consumers to Coverage](#) --- This expert perspective highlights messages to encourage consumers to check out coverage options during open enrollment and profiles two state examples of coordination to ensure consumers encounter “no wrong door” in their search for coverage.

Thank You

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