

Why Medicaid is Important



Medicaid is the primary health insurance program for low-income Americans, offering quality, affordable, and comprehensive health care coverage to nearly 65 million people¹ – including those with cancer, those who will be diagnosed with cancer, and cancer survivors. Having health insurance through Medicaid helps Americans stay healthy, go to work, care for their families and pay their bills. The Medicaid program also helps communities, hospitals, schools, and economy thrive.

Medicaid Covers Critical Populations

Children	<i>Over one in three school-aged children are covered by Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).²</i>
Elderly and Disabled	<i>Medicaid provides coverage for 19 percent of Medicare beneficiaries, 62 percent of all nursing home residents, and 45 percent of all disabled, non-elderly adults.³</i>
Pregnant Women	<i>Medicaid covers nearly half of all births.³</i>
Low-Income Parents and Adults	<i>Over 13 million individuals have gained Medicaid coverage as a direct result of the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) expansion of Medicaid eligibility to individuals below 138 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL).⁴</i>

Of those eligible, approximately **2.3 million people (infants to age 64) with cancer or a history of cancer rely on Medicaid and CHIP for their insurance.**⁵

Medicaid Works

Medicaid provides cost-effective, high-quality coverage to beneficiaries who, on average, have greater health needs. Additionally, Medicaid serves as a vital source of financial protection by limiting out-of-pocket costs for beneficiaries.

- ✓ From 2014 to 2017, the expansion of the Medicaid program saved the lives of over 19,000 adults aged 55 to 64, with an estimated 39 to 64 percent reduction in annual mortality rates for older adults gaining coverage.⁶
- ✓ Infant mortality rates in Medicaid expansion states fell while rates in non-expansion states rose.⁷
- ✓ Medicaid enrollees report access to a usual source of care and are less likely than the uninsured to forego care due to cost.⁸
- ✓ Studies examining Medicaid expansion have found an association between expansion and reductions in cardiovascular mortality, psychological distress, improvements in managing high blood pressure, and reductions in uncompensated care costs for hospitals.⁸
- ✓ Medicaid plays an important role in addressing the opioid epidemic and connecting Medicaid beneficiaries to behavioral health services.⁸
- ✓ Medicaid expansion is associated with a reduction in the rate of poverty, with 690,000 fewer Americans living in poverty thanks to expansion.⁸
- ✓ Medicaid expansion has had a large impact on Medicaid coverage or uninsured rates in rural populations.⁸

Medicaid is Important for Cancer Patients, Survivors, and the Newly Diagnosed

Research continues to show that patients forego health services, including important preventive services like colonoscopies and mammograms, when they must pay more out-of-pocket.⁹ Medicaid coverage provides affordable access to life-saving preventive services and cancer treatments to cancer patients, survivors, and those who will be diagnosed with the disease in their lifetime.

- ✓ The prevalence of uninsured cancer patients fell substantially more in Medicaid expansion states than non-expansion states between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- ✓ Medicaid expansion was associated with significant gains in coverage for cancer survivors.¹¹
- ✓ Most Medicaid beneficiaries,¹² particularly the expansion population, receive coverage for the full range of cancer screenings and other preventive care to help prevent and detect cancers early, helping to both save lives and save state dollars on costly treatments for later-stage cancers.
- ✓ Medicaid expansion was associated with improved rates of colorectal,¹³ prostate, and cervical cancer screenings.¹⁴
- ✓ Women diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer through the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP) are provided a pathway to treatment through Medicaid.
- ✓ Individuals enrolled in Medicaid prior to their cancer diagnosis have better survival rates than those who enroll after their diagnosis.¹⁵
- ✓ Medicaid expansion led to an increase in both total and earlier-stage cancer diagnoses in expansion states, while the gap in diagnoses between expansion and non-expansion states widened.¹⁶
- ✓ Medicaid expansion was associated with decreased cigarette and other tobacco product purchases, as well as increased access, utilization, and coverage of evidence-based smoking cessation medications.¹⁷

Medicaid is Flexible

Under current law, the federal government sets minimum Medicaid eligibility standards but gives states the flexibility to try innovative approaches to their Medicaid programs.

- ✓ Section 1115 of the Social Security Act allows states to seek waivers to expand eligibility to individuals otherwise ineligible for Medicaid, provide additional services, or test innovative service delivery systems, as long as the proposals assist in promoting the objectives of the Medicaid program (see *Medicaid 1115 Research and Demonstration Waivers* for more information).¹⁸ If administered as intended, these waivers can help to provide additional coverage to more people.

¹ Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. *September 2019 Medicaid & CHIP Enrollment Data Highlights*. Accessed January 2020. <https://www.medicare.gov/medicaid/program-information/medicaid-and-chip-enrollment-data/report-highlights/index.html>.

² Alker J, Roygardner L. The number of uninsured children is on the rise. *Georgetown University Center for Children and Families*. Published October 2019. Accessed January 2020. <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Uninsured-Kids-Report.pdf>.

³ Rudowitz R, Garfield R, Hinton E. 10 things to know about Medicaid: setting the facts straight. *Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*. Published March 6, 2019. Accessed January 2020. <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/10-things-to-know-about-medicaid-setting-the-facts-straight/>.

⁴ Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission. *Medicaid enrollment changes following the ACA*. Results as of April 2019. Accessed January 2020. <https://www.macpac.gov/subtopic/medicaid-enrollment-changes-following-the-aca/>.

⁵ Analysis provided to ACS CAN by Avalere Health. Funding for Medicaid patients with cancer under BCRA Discussion Draft. Analysis performed June 2017.

⁶ Miller S, Altekruze S, Johnson N, Wherry LR. Medicaid and mortality: New evidence from linked survey and administrative data. *NBER*. Working Paper No. 26081. August 2019. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w26081>.

⁷ Bhatt CB, Beck-Sagué CM. Medicaid expansion and infant mortality in the United States. *Am J Public Health*. 2018; 108(4):565-67.

⁸ Antonisse L, Garfield R, Rudowitz R, Guth M. The effects of Medicaid expansion under the ACA: Updated findings from a literature review. *Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*. Published August 2019. Accessed January 2020. <http://files.kff.org/attachment/Issue-brief-The-Effects-of-Medicaid-Expansion-under-the-ACA-Findings-from-a-Literature-Review>.

- ⁹ Chernew ME & Newhouse JP. What Does the RAND Health Insurance Experiment Tell Us About the Impact of Patient Cost Sharing on Health Outcomes?. *American Journal of Managed Care*. 2008; pp. 412-414; Solanki G, Schauffler HH, Miller LS. The direct and indirect effects of cost sharing on the use of preventive services. *Health Services Research*. 2000; 34: 1331-50; Wharam JF, Graves AJ, Landon BE, Zhang F, Soumerai SB, Ross-Degnan D. Two-year trends in colorectal cancer screening after switch to a high-deductible health plan. *Med Care*. 2011; 49: 865-71.
- ¹⁰ Han X, Yabroff K R, Ward E, Brawley O, Jemal A. Comparison of insurance status and diagnosis stage among patients with newly diagnosed cancer before vs after implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. *JAMA Oncology*. (2018); doi:10.1001/jamaoncol.2018.3467.
- ¹¹ Davidoff AJ, Guy GP Jr, Hu X, et al. Changes in health insurance coverage associated with the Affordable Care Act among adults with and without a cancer history: Population-based National estimates. *Med Care*. 2018;56(3):220-7.
- ¹² Individuals who qualify for Medicaid in states that have expanded their Medicaid programs receive full coverage of preventive services. Individuals who qualify for Medicaid due to some other category may not necessarily have access to all preventive benefits.
- ¹³ Fedewa SA, Yabroff R, Smith RA, et al. Changes in breast and colorectal cancer screening after Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act. *Am J Prev Med*. 2019;57(1):3-12; Hendryx M & Luo J. Increased Cancer Screening for Low-income Adults Under the Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansion. *Med Care*. 2018; 56(11):944-49.
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- ¹⁵ Adams E, Chien LN, Florence CS, et al. The Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act in Georgia: effects on time to Medicaid enrollment. *Cancer*. (2009); 115(6):1300-9.
- ¹⁶ Soni A, Cawley J, Sabik L, & Simon K. Effect of Medicaid Expansions of 2014 on Overall and Early-Stage Cancer Diagnoses. *The American Journal of Public Health*, 108(2), 216–218. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2017.304166.
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- ¹⁸ 42 U.S.C. § 1315a.