



Colorado Covering Kids and Families

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 19, 2012

CONTACT

Brittney Petersen, 303-861-5165
x 253

brittney@cchn.org

Steady Progress to Cover Kids and Families in Colorado, but Opportunities Remain

Denver –Colorado’s Covering Kids and Families (CKF) project released a publication today highlighting the progress made and opportunities to improve enrollment and retention in Medicaid and Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) for eligible children and families. The third in a series, *Colorado’s Maze to Enrollment in Medicaid and CHP+* is based on insight from parents and professionals who routinely navigate the maze of barriers to public health coverage in Colorado. This report emphasizes the advances that Colorado has made to simplify the processes and improve enrollment and access to Medicaid and CHP+. It provides recommendations to continue building more efficiency.

“Policy makers, state agencies, community leaders, and stakeholders recognized the importance of health insurance for children and families, and put into place several simplifications that are making the system work better for eligible families. Families benefit from the system improvements and the peace of mind that coverage provides” said Brittney Petersen, manager of the CKF Project.

Over the past several years, three of Colorado’s significant improvements include:

- An easier, online application that allows Coloradoans to apply for and manage their own cases through the Colorado Program Eligibility and Application Kit (Colorado PEAK) (www.colorado.gov/peak).
- Electronic citizenship and identity verification and automatic renewal for eligible families, which reduce paperwork for both families and enrollment professionals.
- Expansions to cover an additional 55,000 Colorado kids, parents, and pregnant women, made possible by the 2009 Colorado Health Care Affordability Act.

In addition to showcasing improvements, the report assesses previously identified and new barriers that create a confusing and difficult path for families attempting to enroll and stay enrolled in Medicaid and CHP+. CKF makes nine specific and practical recommendations that aim to tear down the maze preventing kids and families from accessing coverage and health care. Implementation of the recommendations would ensure that Colorado’s Medicaid and CHP+ programs work efficiently and effectively for eligible families, taxpayers, and the state, and that Colorado can maximize improvements to health care access available through the Affordable Care Act.

Three of the fundamental recommendations that remain for Colorado are:

- Improve the state’s eligibility system to meet the needs of Coloradoans, comply with federal requirements, and minimize costly inefficiencies for families and counties.
- Simplify client correspondence regarding eligibility and benefits to reduce client confusion and the subsequent impacts on public resources and families’ health.

- Implement 12-month continuous eligibility for children in Medicaid to improve program efficiency and ensure kids and families are covered when they need it.

The report points out that between 112,299 and 124,128 children in Colorado lack health insurance coverage. Kids who have coverage are more likely to have a health care home, have access to preventative care services, and get the care they need than uninsured children.

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Please click [here](#) to access the report. For more information or to interview a CKF representative, please contact Brittney Petersen at (303) 861-5165, Ext. 253, or brittney@cchn.org.

CKF is a statewide coalition of 220 organizations and more than 375 individuals with experience and expertise in outreach and enrollment for Medicaid and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+). CKF's mission is to ensure that eligible children and families can enroll and remain enrolled in Medicaid and CHP+ by supporting and facilitating effective outreach, simplifying the enrollment and re-enrollment process, and improving coordination between the programs. For ten years, the CKF coalition has assessed the ongoing needs of state and local communities and informed policy recommendations on Medicaid and CHP+ outreach, enrollment and retention. For more information about CKF, please visit <http://www.cchn.org/ckf/aboutus.php>.