



## February 2018 Coalition Update

February 16, 2018

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### **CKF News**

#### **February Coalition Meeting**

Click [here](#) to listen to a recording of the February Coalition Meeting. Notes will be distributed before the next CKF Coalition meeting.

#### **2017 Health First Colorado and CHP+ Enrollment Analysis**

CKF reviews adult's and children's enrollment in Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) and Child Health Plan *Plus* on a quarterly basis, and typically releases quarterly analyses. In 2017, CKF consolidated the quarterly reports into one year-end analysis. Overall, CKF found that Health First Colorado caseload for both adults and children fell in 2017. Children's Health First Colorado caseload declined steadily between May and December, while adult's Health First Colorado caseload declined sharply between September and October. Click [here](#) to review the 2017 Enrollment Analysis.

### **Policy Updates**

#### **Budget Agreement and Continuing Resolution**

Last week, Congress passed a continuing resolution that funded the federal government through March 23, 2018. The Bipartisan Budget Act included funding for the Children's Health

Insurance Program (CHIP) through September 2027, and funding for Federally Qualified community health centers through September 2019. The provisions from the HEALTHY KIDS ACT (Helping Ensure Access for Little Ones, Toddlers, and Hopeful Youth by Keeping Insurance Delivery Stable Act), which extended CHIP for six years just a few weeks ago on January 22, remain in place with the following additions:

- Additional four years of funding for CHIP for Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027;
- Extension of the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements through 2027;
- A new requirement for states to report quality measures in the child core set beginning in FFY 2024; and
- Extension of the contingency fund, the qualifying state option, express lane eligibility, the pediatric quality measures program, and the outreach and enrollment program through FFY 2027.

Click [here](#) for a summary of the provisions in the Bipartisan Budget Act, and [here](#) for a summary of the HEALTHY KIDS Act from the Georgetown Center for Children and Families.

### **Anticipated Proposed Rule Could Impact Meaning of “Public Charge”**

The Department of Homeland Security recently informed the Office of Management and Budget that it plans to propose regulations that would change the long-standing meaning, and application, of the “public charge” provisions of immigration law in July 2018. A public charge is currently defined as a person who is primarily dependent on government for subsistence. An immigrant who is deemed likely to become a public charge can be denied admission to the U.S. or denied the ability to become a lawful permanent resident. Current policy allows officials to consider only two types of public benefits to determine whether someone is a public charge: cash assistance for income maintenance, and institutionalization of long-term care services at the government’s expense. Current policy does not consider other public benefits the immigrants may be eligible for, including Medicaid or Food Assistance.

A leaked draft of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) proposes expanding the public benefits that could be considered when determining whether an individual is likely to become a public charge. The National Immigration Law Center (NILC) notes that, “if the draft proposal were adopted, immigration and consular officials could consider whether individuals or any of their dependent family members, including U.S. citizen children, had received or simply sought virtually any public service. Benefits that could be considered in a public charge determination would include virtually any public service, such as Medicaid, CHIP, SNAP, WIC, Section 8 housing vouchers, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Head Start and financial assistance provided through the health insurance marketplaces established under the Affordable Care Act.” The draft NPRM states that these benefits would only be considered if those benefits are received after the effective date of the final rule. At this time, the proposed rule has only been leaked; it has not been published officially. The NPRM could be published at any time this spring, or it is possible that it will not be published at all. CKF will watch for official publication of the NPRM in the Federal Register and will continue to keep the coalition informed of how this may impact your clients. Click [here](#) to read NILC’s overview of the anticipated proposed rule, and potential action steps.

### **Social Security Cost of Living Adjustments**

The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) announced that monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits will increase due to a Cost of Living Adjustment of two percent beginning January 1, 2018. Click [here](#) to read the agency letter.

### **Individual Marketplace Enrollment**

New [data](#) from the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) indicates that overall plan selections in the 2018 open enrollment period in state-based marketplaces (SBMs), the state-based marketplaces that use the federal platform (SBM-FPs), and the federally facilitated marketplace (FFM) remained generally stable despite national uncertainty surrounding health care reform. States with SBMs (like Colorado), and SBM-FPs experienced a slight increase in enrollment, while states utilizing the FFM experienced a drop in enrollment of about five percent. The national total of consumers who selected a plan for 2018 comes to 11.8 million, which is an approximately four percent less than those who selected a plan in 2017. Click [here](#) to read the full press release.

### **HCPF Began Sending 1095-B Forms in January**

HCPF began mailing 1095-B tax forms to nearly all Health First Colorado and Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) members in January. The form is a federal tax document that includes information about the months during 2017 in which Health First Colorado and CHP+ members were enrolled in qualifying health coverage. Members are not required to include the 1095-B form with their tax return, but they should keep it with their tax records to verify coverage. Click [here](#) to review the 1095-B tax form quick guide.

### **HCPF's New Asset Verification Program**

On December 17, 2017 HCPF implemented the Asset Verification Program (AVP). The AVP is an electronic data source that will verify liquid assets for Non-Modified Adjusted Gross Income (non-MAGI) Health First Colorado programs for individuals who have a disability and/or are ages 65 and older. HCPF implemented this program because it is a federal requirement. Click [here](#) to read the agency letter, and here for an [FAQ](#).

### **Outreach and Enrollment**

#### **PEAK Technical Support Center**

The PEAK Technical Support Center offers support to clients and assisters who are experiencing technical difficulties with the PEAK website including password resets. Users can contact the support call center at 1-800-250-7741, or message the help desk at [CBMS.Help@state.co.us](mailto:CBMS.Help@state.co.us). Click [here](#) to learn more about the PEAK Technical Support Center.

### **Resources**

#### **Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger Seeking Endorsements**

The Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger is seeking endorsements from individuals and organizations to establish their support of the vision and goals of the [Blueprint](#). Employees seeking their employers' endorsements should follow their organization's internal process for officially endorsing a statewide initiative. Have an authorized representative of your organization send an email to [info@endhungerco.org](mailto:info@endhungerco.org) stating your official support or visit the [website](#) to register your endorsement.

#### **New, Personalized, Health First Colorado Member Handbooks**

Personalized Health First Colorado member handbooks are now available through PEAK. These new member handbooks explain each member of the household's specific benefits

based on their eligibility category. Click [here](#) to access member handbooks through PEAK. HCPF has also created posters to help spread the word about these new handbooks. Click [here](#) to find posters that can be displayed anywhere that Health First Colorado members visit.

## Upcoming Calls, Trainings, and Events

### DHS Health Navigator Training

Denver Human Services (DHS) offers a navigator training for community partners. The navigator training includes an overview of the programs DHS offers, including food assistance, basic eligibility for Health First Colorado and cash programs, energy assistance, child support, childcare assistance program, PEAK, and a brief overview of the ACA. For more information and to register, please contact Kathy Crusan-Ford, Agency Trainer for SNAP Into Health, at [Kathleen.Crusan-Ford@denvergov.org](mailto:Kathleen.Crusan-Ford@denvergov.org). The upcoming trainings will be held:

- **Friday, March 16** from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 1200 Federal Blvd. Room 1019, Denver

### CCHI's Health Care Day of Action

The Colorado Consumer Health Initiative (CCHI) is hosting its tenth annual Health Care Day of Action. This event is an opportunity for consumers and advocates from all over Colorado to discuss important policy issues, and engage legislators on current health care policy in our state. Click [here](#) to register and learn more.

- **Thursday, February 22** from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. 1373 Grant Street, Denver

### DHS Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

DHS is hosting a series of Youth Mental Health First Aid training classes at no cost. The classes are designed to help participants identify signs of mental health problems in adolescents, and learn how to best assist an adolescent experiencing a mental health crisis. The training is open to adults from all counties. Click [here](#) to register.

- **Monday, March 5** from 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 3815 Steele Street, Room 1032, Denver
- **Tuesday, March 20** from 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 3815 Steele Street, Room 1032, Denver

### HCPF Videos and Materials on Improving Disability Competent Care

HCPF launched a series of disability competency training videos and materials for primary care providers and staff. These videos and materials are designed to help viewers better understand the barriers that people with disabilities face when accessing care, and changes that can be made to improve their practice. Click [here](#) to learn more about disability competent care.

## What We're Reading

### Working Americans Are Using Less Health Care, But Spending More

A new analysis from the Health Care Cost Institute found that Americans who get their health insurance through their employers are not using more medical care than they were five years ago, but are spending more. The analysis found that these Americans are spending more because of soaring medical prices, including expensive emergency room visits, surgeries, and prescription medication. Click [here](#) to review The Washington Post's Summary.

## Geeks Come to Government's Rescue

Code for America (CfA) has taken on the challenge of integrated benefits enrollment in hopes of simplifying the process of enrolling eligible people into Medicaid and Food Stamps. CfA is working with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, a new tech start-up called Nava, and the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative to create a cost effective and simplified solution. Read the Governing article on the collaborative effort [here](#).