

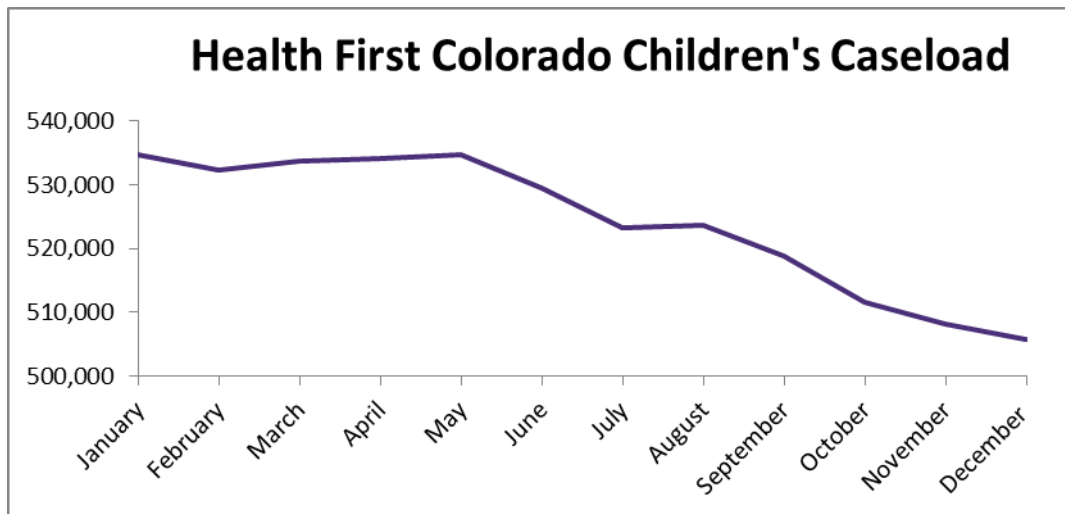
# 2017 Health First Colorado and CHP+ Enrollment Analysis



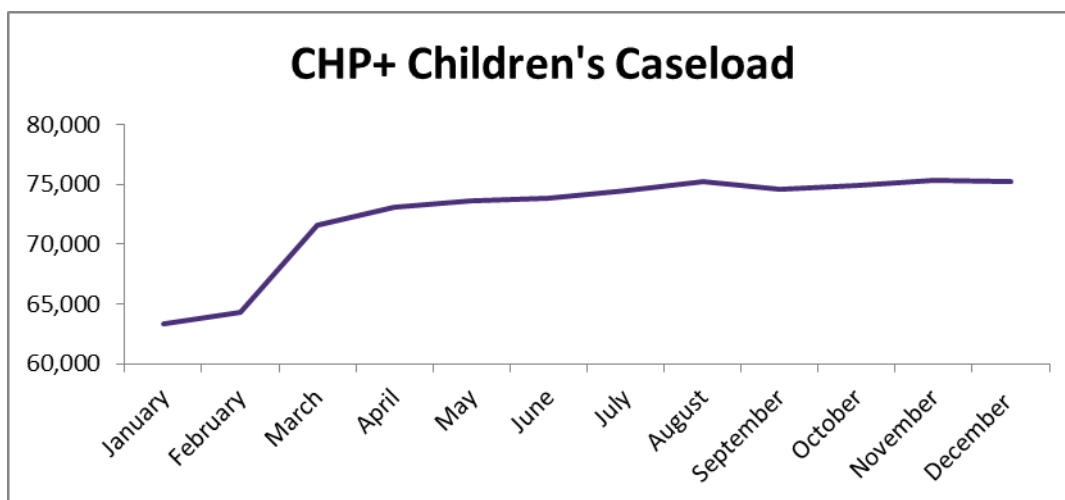
Colorado Covering Kids and Families

This series of reports analyzes children's enrollment changes in Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) and identifies factors that may have contributed to an increase or decrease in enrollment. The data source used is the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing's [Premiums, Expenditures and Caseload Reports](#). Previous enrollment analyses can be found at [ckf.cchn.org/quarterly-enrollment-reports](http://ckf.cchn.org/quarterly-enrollment-reports).

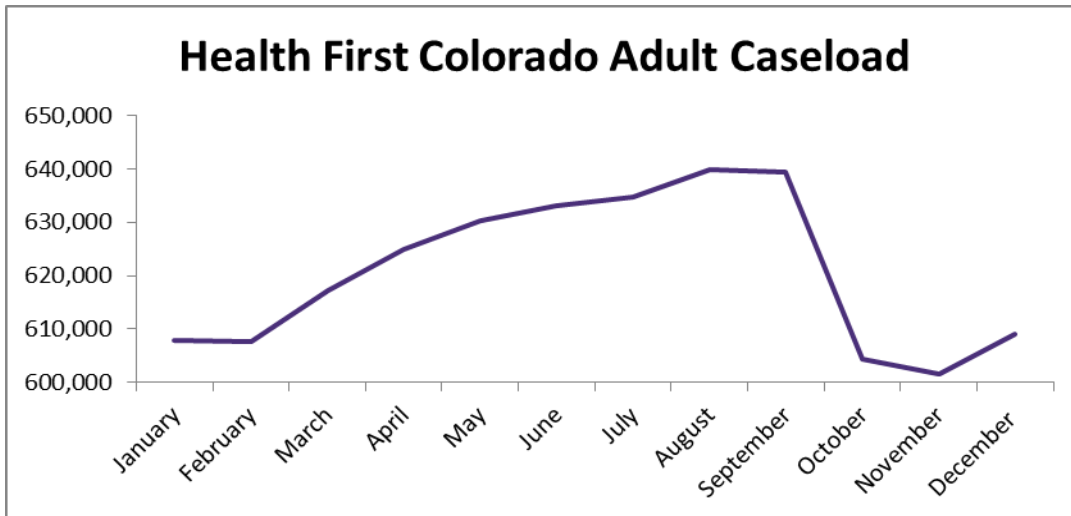
## 2017 Enrollment Trends



The total amount of children enrolled in Health First Colorado (excluding foster care) decreased by **28,963**, or five percent, over the course of 2017. Most of the decrease occurred beginning in May; and by December there were **28,879** fewer children enrolled in Health First Colorado. In the same May to December period, enrollment in Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) grew by only 1,614. This indicates that if children are losing eligibility for Health First Colorado because their families experience an increase of income, the majority are not subsequently enrolling in CHP+.



The total number of children enrolled in CHP+ increased by **11,890**, or 19 percent, over the course of 2017. The majority of the CHP+ caseload increase occurred between February and March, when the caseload increased by 12 percent, a total of **7,300** children.



The number of non-disabled adults (MAGI adults plus parent and caretaker relatives) enrolled in Health First Colorado caseload increased by a total of **1,107** from January to December. In the first part of 2017, adult caseload was steady, with a slight increase each month until August. The largest drop in enrollment was between September and October, when the number of cases declined by six percent, a total of **35,100** in one month.

### What Impacted Enrollment in 2017?

Enrollment in 2017 was likely impacted by uncertainty surrounding the federal government’s health care policy goals and immigration agenda. Competing headlines throughout the year may have caused confusion about whether the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was still in effect, which would impact those who were eligible for Health First Colorado through the Medicaid expansion. Several Congress members also made several statements about their intent to reform Medicaid, causing concern amongst those who are enrolled. Covering Kids and Families (CKF) also heard anecdotes from coalition members throughout the year about parents terminating their children’s enrollment in Health First Colorado because they feared that their information would be used to identify undocumented family members.

There were several systems changes implemented in March that may have impacted enrollment throughout the remainder of the year. The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) made updates to its process for verifying income through their interface using employment data from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE). HCPF implemented new processes if the system is not able to verify the person’s income through the interface, or if there is a discrepancy in what the individual self-attests and what is reported through CDLE. If verification is requested, the individual is required to provide verification of income within a 90 day Reasonable Opportunity Period in order to continue enrollment or to re-enroll. While children have continuous eligibility for 12 months from the date they enrolled, their parents have to verify their income at least once during that time to maintain their enrollment. The decline in the children’s Health First Colorado caseload suggests that parents of enrollees struggled to verify their income within this opportunity period. HCPF has issued a fact sheet describing some of the reasons for the caseload decline in 2017, [here](#).

In March, HCPF also implemented a new Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) called the Colorado interChange. Although it is unlikely that the new MMIS impacted eligibility and enrollment in Health First Colorado, CKF did hear multiple reports from coalition members that the interChange did not read eligibility information from CBMS accurately.

## Looking Forward

CKF anticipates that caseloads for CHP+ and Health First Colorado will increase at a relatively steady rate in 2018. The CHP+ caseload is likely to increase faster in the first and second quarter because of the federal reauthorization of CHIP funding. In July, the ACC (Accountable Care Collaborative) will be establishing RAEs (Regional Accountable Entities). The goal of establishing RAEs is to create comprehensive medical homes for people enrolled in Health First Colorado where they can manage their physical health, behavioral health, and benefits in one location. It is not clear what impact the implementation of RAEs may have on enrollment.

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