



## MONTHLY MEETING NOTES

July 16, 2021

### Legislative Update

Alice Steiner, Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN), provided a recap of the legislative session, which ended on June 9. During this session, over 600 bills were introduced, and over 500 passed. Typically, around 50% of bills pass in a legislative session, this year it was 81%.

The following bills that passed that are relevant for CKF members include:

- [HB21-1232](#) Standardized Health Benefit Plan Colorado Option
  - This bill, which would go into effect in 2023 if approved by the federal government, will require health insurance carriers to offer a highly regulated, standardized plan in each county that they currently serve. The goal is for the plan to have reduced premiums and to provide services such as primary care and other preventative services, as a pre-deductible. This plan will be available to Coloradans without documentation.
- [SB21-009](#) Reproductive Health Care Program
  - This bill will provide Medicaid-covered contraceptive methods, including a 12-month supply of contraceptives, and counseling services to people without documentation, who would otherwise be eligible for Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program), except for their immigration status. This program is paid for by state-only Medicaid funds, and will begin on January 1, 2022.
- [SB21-194](#): Maternal Health Providers
  - This bill works to improve outcomes for labor and delivery services, including extending Health First Colorado and Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) coverage to 12-months postpartum. It will also require insurance carriers to reimburse providers in a manner that promotes high-quality and cost-effective care. This extension will go into effect in July 2022.

Alice shared an update on the state budget. Colorado received \$4 billion in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, and an additional \$1.5 billion allocated to local counties and municipalities. The funding is one-time, and must be allocated by the end of 2024, and spent by the end of 2026. Legislators are meeting in interim committees, and with subpanels of experts, to make a roadmap for the funding. A lot of the funding has already been earmarked for housing services and behavioral health support.

### Connect for Health Colorado Updates

Jessalyn Hampton, Connect for Health Colorado, provided information about CoverCO, the end of the Special Enrollment Period, and a reminder of ARPA changes.

CoverCO is October 5-7, and will be virtual again this year, with potential networking events later in the year.

Jessalyn shared that there are over 205,000 enrollees in Connect for Health Colorado. August 15 is the last day of the Special Enrollment Period. Due to ARPA, the income cap for financial assistance was removed, and many more Coloradans are eligible for affordable enrollment in Connect for Health Colorado. One out of five individuals may be eligible for a net \$0 premium plan, and about three out of four customers are eligible for a \$25 net premium plan or less. Individuals who have taken at least one week of unemployment in 2021 are still eligible for a net zero-dollar premium plan.

### **HCPF Updates**

Jeff Jaskunas, the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF), shared updates on the State Managed Care Network (SMCN) transition to Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). Beginning July 1, all new CHP+ members are automatically enrolled in a CHP+ MCO. Before this change, children were enrolled in the CHP+ SMCN and then transitioned to an MCO. Pregnant adults were never transitioned to an MCO, and remained in the SMCN until their CHP+ benefits ended. With this SMCN transition, CHP+ benefits, eligibility, and cost sharing will remain the same.

HCPF is communicating about this update through targeted letters and FAQ information sent directly to members. Members only receive information that is relevant to them. Additionally, the member contact center has common talking points to ensure messages remain consistent when members call with questions. Colorado Access, the previous SMCN vendor and providers have also been communicating directly with members and patients. For future members, HCPF will include MCO details in enrollment information. To learn more, read the [CHP+ SMCN talking points](#).

HCPF identified all of the SMCN members who were pregnant, and communicated member and provider matches to each MCO. This allowed for MCOs to reach out to providers who were not previously in their network to initiate contracting and credentialing, or execute single case agreements so that those members could stay with their existing provider. Pregnant members in their second or third trimester can remain with their existing provider for the remainder of their pregnancy. Pregnant individuals in their first trimester may need to transition to a new provider, but will have a 60-day post-transition period to do so.

HCPF is using data analytics to track eligibility and enrollment, and is keeping in close contact with MCOs to ensure that the transition is going as planned.

Learn more from CKF's blog post about [Talking to Your Clients About the CHP+ SMCN Transition](#).

Lisa Pera, HCPF, shared updates on the new income verification interface, The Work Number. HCPF implemented two new income verification interfaces in June. To confirm income information, HCPF will first check the Federal Data Services Hub, which is a free service housed at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). If the member's information is not available there, HCPF will use Equifax The Work Number, a paid service. These interfaces will allow HCPF to conduct income verification quicker and more accurately, as the information is more up-to-date. HCPF will still use Income Eligibility and Verification System (IEVS) data from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment after checking the first two systems, and then will send the member a request for verification if their information cannot be verified electronically, the same as the previous process.

This change will not impact the member experience. Income verifications are only run at application, redetermination, and if a change is reported.

HCPF also worked with the member experience advisory council to update the income verification letters sent to members. Learn more, and read the letters sent to members here:

- [Income Discrepancy Verification – Spanish](#)
- [Income Discrepancy Verification – English](#)
- [Income Discrepancy Verification Seasonal – Spanish](#)
- [Income Discrepancy Verification Seasonal – English](#)

**Next meeting: August 20, 2021**