

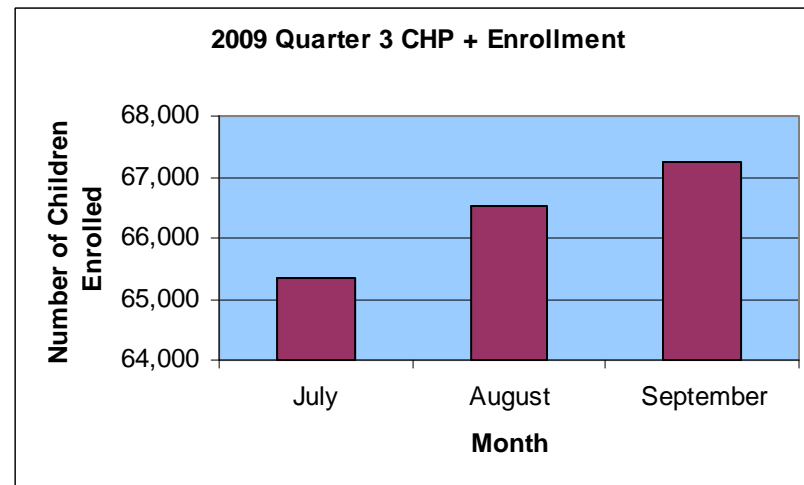
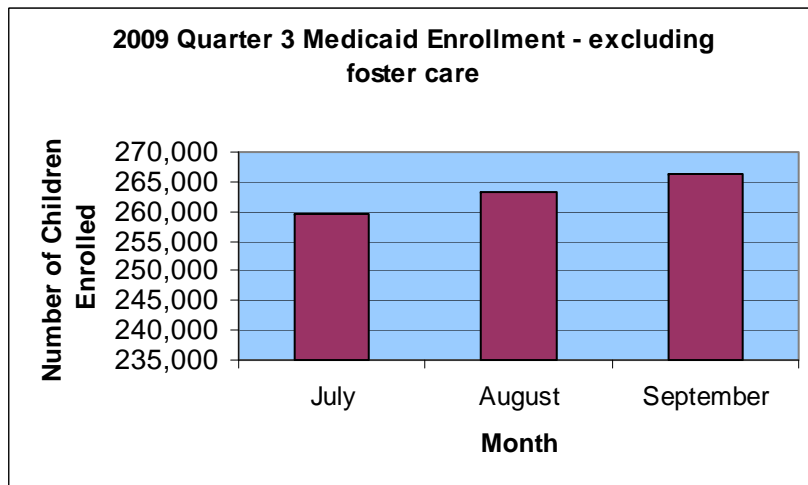
## Colorado Medicaid and CHP+ Children's Enrollment – 2009 Quarter Three

The purpose of this report is to illustrate children's enrollment changes in Colorado's Medicaid and Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) programs and if appropriate, identify corresponding legislation, rule changes, and other factors that may have contributed to an increase or decrease. This report briefly reviews 2009 first and second quarters and describes 2009 third quarter enrollment. The enrollment data used for this report is from the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing Medical Services Premiums, Expenditures and Medicaid Caseload Reports.<sup>1</sup>

The U.S. economy continued to slow down during the first and second quarters of 2009. The unemployment rate is often used to illustrate economic performance.<sup>2</sup> The unemployment rate in Colorado, adjusted for seasonal employment, continued to grow since November 2007, reaching 7.8% in July 2009.<sup>3</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that for every one percent increase in the national unemployment rate, Medicaid and CHIP enrollment could increase by 1 million and the number of uninsured to 1.1 million.<sup>4</sup> In Colorado, 19,000 individuals lose their health insurance with each one percent increase in the unemployment rate.<sup>5</sup>

### Third Quarter of 2009

Enrollment of children in Medicaid and CHP+ continued to increase during the third quarter of 2009. At the end of September, children's Medicaid enrollment, excluding foster care was 266,381 and CHP+ children's enrollment was 67,239. Colorado's unemployment rate decreased from 7.8% in July to 7.0% in September.<sup>6</sup> Although Colorado's unemployment rate decreased, a corresponding decrease or stabilization of public program enrollment was not seen. Both unemployment rate and Medicaid case growth typically see improvements one to two years after a recession is over.<sup>7</sup> Possible reasons for the decreased unemployment and increased enrollment could be that individuals have stopped looking for work<sup>8</sup>, may have found part time work, or found a work that does not provide health benefits. Another factor that could have contributed to the increase is the implementation of a Colorado rule that eliminates the requirement for newborns whose birth was paid for by Medicaid to prove their citizenship after one year of eligibility ends and allows specific tribal documents to be used to establish citizenship.



Children's Medicaid enrollment increased 1.16% from June to July, 1.46% from July to August, and 1.13% from August to September. These percent increases between months were less than those between quarter two months. CHP+ enrollment increased from 1.16% from June to July, 1.81% from July to August, and 1.06% from August to September. This is the first quarter that CHP+ enrollment increased each month.

## Conclusion

Implementation of Phase I of the Colorado Program Eligibility Application Kit (PEAK), back to school outreach efforts, impact of provider rate cuts, and the health of the economy could affect next quarter's enrollment numbers.

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<sup>1</sup> The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. (2009). Premiums, Expenditures, and Caseload Reports. Retrieved November 2, 2009, from <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/HCPF/HCPF/1209635766663>

<sup>2</sup> Barker Center for Economic Education. Retrieved April 30, 2009, from [http://www.federalreserveeducation.org/fed101\\_html/policy/indicators\\_print.htm](http://www.federalreserveeducation.org/fed101_html/policy/indicators_print.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009). *Databases and Tables*. Retrieved December 29, 2009, from <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>

<sup>4</sup> Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. (2008). *Medicaid, SCHIP, and Economic Downturn: Policy Changes and Policy Responses*. Retrieved March 25, 2009, from <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/7770ES.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> *Health Elevations*. The Colorado Health Foundation. Summer 2009.

<sup>6</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009). *Databases and Tables*. Retrieved December 29, 2009, from <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>

<sup>7</sup> Kaiser Commission on Key Facts. (2009). *Medicaid and State Budgets: From Crunch to Cliff*. Retrieved January 4, 2010, from <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/8001.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> *The Denver Post*. "Colorado Unemployment Dips in October." November 21, 2009. Retrieved January 11, 2010, from [http://www.denverpost.com/money/ci\\_13837339](http://www.denverpost.com/money/ci_13837339)