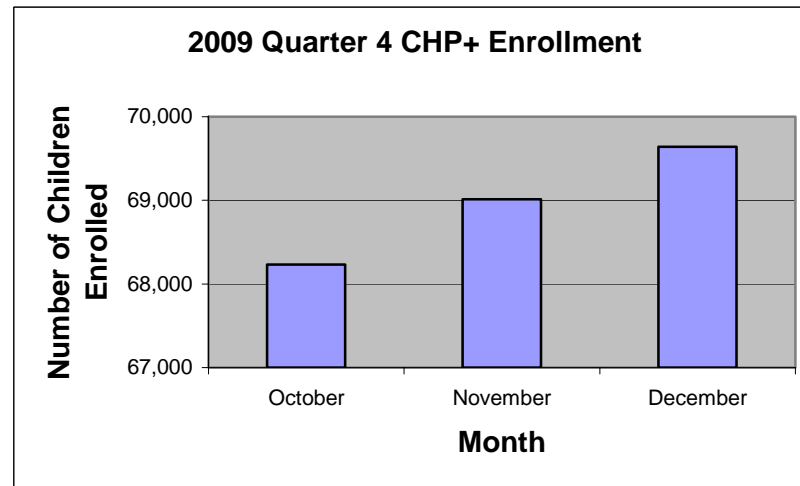
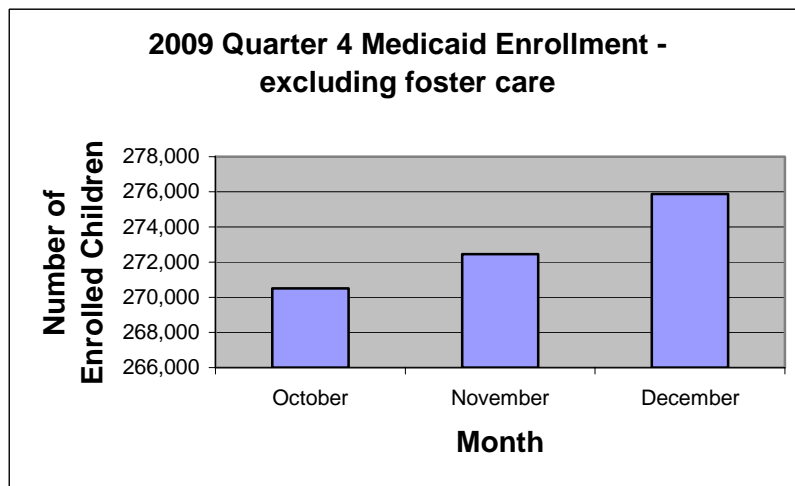


## Colorado Medicaid and CHP+ Children's Enrollment – 2009 Quarter Four

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 describes 2009 fourth quarter enrollment and reviews all of 2009. 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>

### Fourth Quarter of 2009

Enrollment of children in Medicaid and CHP+ continued to increase during the fourth quarter of 2009. At the end of December, children's Medicaid enrollment, excluding foster care was 275,867 and CHP+ children's enrollment was 69,640. Colorado's unemployment rate decreased slightly from 7.0% in October to 6.9% in November, and then increased to 7.5% in December.<sup>2</sup> The fluctuation in the unemployment rate was not seen in enrollment numbers. Possible reasons for the continued growth of enrollment numbers could be the short time frame, individuals may have stopped looking for work<sup>3</sup>, may have found part time work, or found work that does not provide health benefits.



Children's Medicaid enrollment increased 1.6% from September to October, 0.7% from October to November, and 1.3% from November to December. CHP+ enrollment increased 1.5% from September to October, 1.1% from October to November, and 0.9% from November to December.

<sup>1</sup> The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. (2009). Premiums, Expenditures, and Caseload Reports. Retrieved January 29, 2010, from <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/HCPF/HCPF/1209635766663>

<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009). *Databases and Tables*. Retrieved February 3, 2010, from <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>

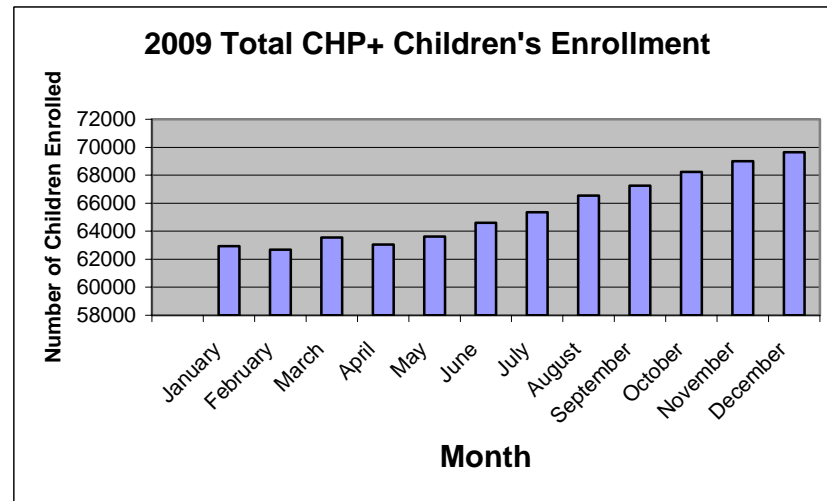
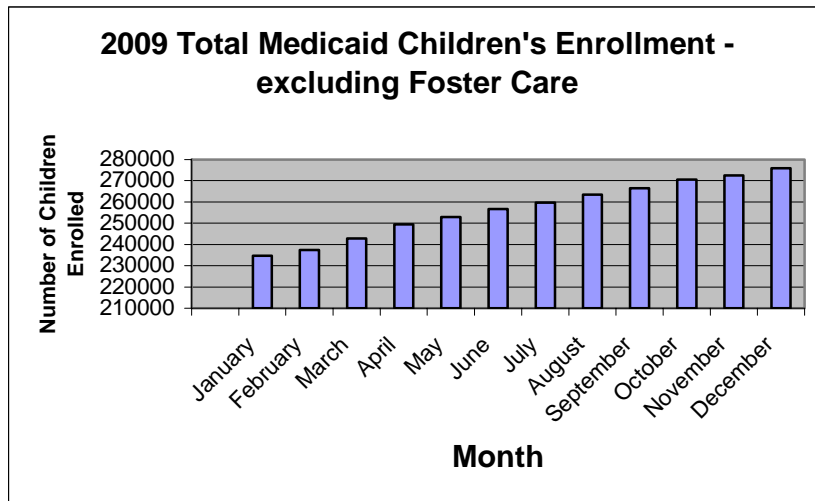
<sup>3</sup> *The Denver Post*. "Colorado Unemployment Dips in October." November 21, 2009. Retrieved January 11, 2010, from [http://www.denverpost.com/money/ci\\_13837339](http://www.denverpost.com/money/ci_13837339)

## Year in Review

Enrollment of children in Medicaid and CHP+ increased overall during 2009. The percent enrollment increase between January and December 2009 was 17.5% and 10.7% for Medicaid and CHP+ respectively. The U.S. economy continued to slow down during the first and second quarters of 2009 and then show some improvement in the third and final quarter. The unemployment rate is often used to illustrate economic performance.<sup>4</sup> The unemployment rate in Colorado, adjusted for seasonal employment, started at 6.6% in January, increased to reach a year high at 7.8% in July, decreased slightly, and landed at 7.5% in December.<sup>5</sup> The status of Colorado's economy most likely had the largest impact on Colorado children's Medicaid and CHP+ enrollment.

Other factors in addition to the economy may have also contributed to increased enrollment in 2009. The Children's Health Insurance Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA) was signed on February 4, 2009. CHIPRA included several provisions that when implemented make it easier for kids and families to enroll and stay enrolled in Medicaid or CHP+. Colorado adopted rules to comply with several CHIPRA provisions in 2009, including, newborns whose birth was paid for by Medicaid no longer need to prove their citizenship after one year of eligibility ends, and Colorado must accept certain tribal documents to establish citizenship.

Colorado also took steps to create an online application, PEAK (Program Eligibility Application Kit). Phase one launched in October and includes two tools for potential applicants and current clients – Am I Eligible? and Check my Benefits. Finally, although the work of the Regional Outreach Coordinators officially ended June 30, 2009, their work had a lasting impact that could have increased enrollment in both programs. Unlike Medicaid, CHP+ enrollment fluctuated slightly the first six months of the year. A possible reason for this fluctuation could have been a lasting result of kids placed on CHP+ the prior year that were technically eligible for Medicaid, but lacked DRA documents and lost coverage during renewal in 2009.



## Conclusion

Implementation of the CHIPRA provision to require citizenship and identity documentation for all CHP+ applicants and the health of the economy could affect enrollment numbers the first quarter of 2010.

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<sup>4</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>5</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009). *Databases and Tables*. Retrieved February 3, 2010, from <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost>