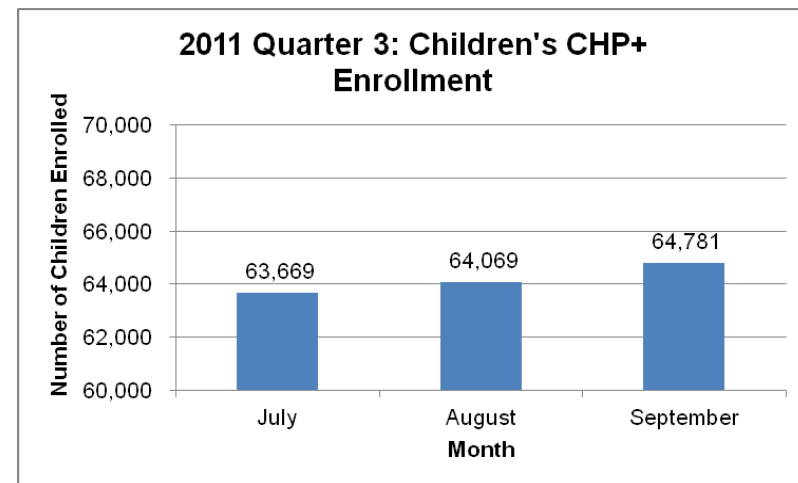
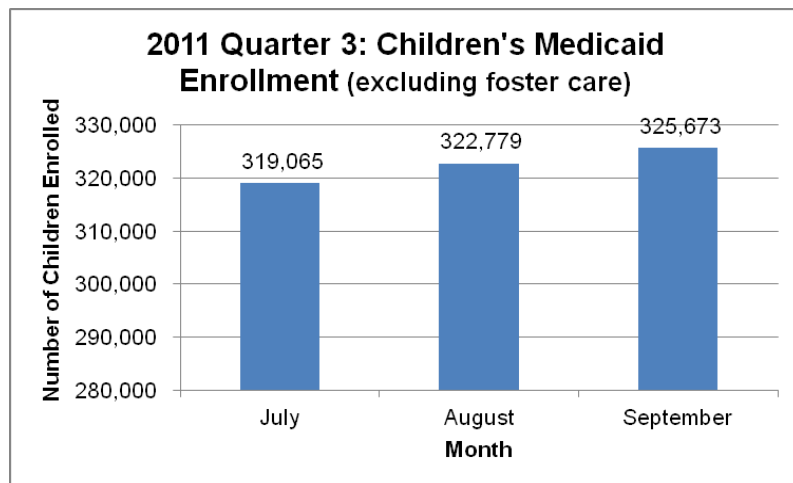


Colorado Children's Medicaid and CHP+ Enrollment – 2011 Quarter Three

The purpose of this report is to illustrate 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 in enrollment. This brief report describes third quarter enrollment of 2011. The enrollment data used for this report is from the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) Medical Services Premiums, Expenditures and Medicaid Caseload Reports.¹

Third Quarter of 2011

Enrollment of children in Medicaid and CHP+ increased in the third quarter of 2011, after CHP+ enrollment decreased from March to July.² At the end of September, children's Medicaid enrollment, excluding foster care, was 325,673 and children's CHP+ enrollment was 64,781. The greatest third quarter Medicaid fluctuation was between July and August when enrollment increased 1.2 percent. The greatest third quarter CHP+ fluctuation was between August and September when enrollment increased 1.1 percent.



The number of children enrolled in CHP+ between 205 percent and 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) continues to increase steadily since implementation of this expansion, from 600 enrollees in May 2010 to 7,275 enrollees in September 2011. This is a result of House Bill 09-1293, the Colorado Health Care Affordability Act, which expanded CHP+ eligibility to 250 percent FPL beginning May 1, 2010.

¹ The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. (2011). Premiums, Expenditures, and Caseload Reports. Retrieved October 19, 2011, from <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/HCPF/HCPF/1209635766663>

² The Colorado Benefits Management System (CBMS) has not been properly transferring all CHP+ information to the Medicaid Management Information System, the claims system for providers. As a result, only a partial record in the State Provider Web Portal is generated, which shows CHP+ coverage but does not indicate health plan enrollment for some CHP+ members. The number of files affected by this issue has increased steadily over the past year. However, this issue is not mentioned as a cause of previous CHP+ enrollment decline because enrollment numbers from HCPF's Medical Services Premiums, Expenditures and Medicaid Caseload Reports are from CBMS, and do not reflect CHP+ clients affected by this issue.

Why is Enrollment Increasing?

There are two likely reasons Medicaid and CHP+ enrollment increased in the third quarter of 2011.

Phase II of Colorado's online application, the Colorado Program Eligibility and Application Kit (PEAK), launched on May 28, 2011. Included in phase II was "Apply for Benefits," a function that allows applicants to complete an application online for Family Medicaid and CHP+. Adding the option to apply online encourages a "no wrong door" approach for applying for public health insurance programs and provides Colorado families with a modern, alternative application option.

In addition, the third round of Maximizing Outreach, Retention, and Enrollment (MORE) grants were awarded on July 26, 2011. The MORE grants most likely led to an increase in Medicaid and CHP+ enrollment as grant awardees have been working to expand enrollment for both programs through outreach and retention efforts.

Looking Forward

On August 29, 2011, HCPF implemented two new policies that streamline the eligibility determination and enrollment processes for Medicaid and CHP+. Most Coloradans can now choose to self-report employment income, eliminating the need to provide paper paystubs with their application, when reporting changes, or when renewing benefits. Using the Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS), the state can extract wage information already reported by employers to the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment to verify income. The state can also electronically verify U.S. citizenship and identity using information from the Social Security Administration (SSA). This means that most applicants no longer need to provide a birth certificate or other proof of citizenship or identity documentation at the time of application—a barrier that has kept many eligible children and families out of Medicaid and CHP+. The IEVS and SSA interfaces were a major change implemented in the third quarter; it will take time to see how they impact enrollment, given various issues Covering Kids and Families has heard from partners and HCPF's plans to mitigate those issues.

In addition, the following could continue to increase enrollment in Medicaid and CHP+ in the fourth quarter:

- The ability to apply for benefits online through PEAK;
- Continued efforts by MORE grantees; and
- Implementation of auto reenrollment and ex parte renewals. Auto reenrollment simplifies the renewal process and allows eligible Coloradans who have had no change in income or number of household members to automatically reenroll in Medicaid and CHP+ without having to return a renewal form. Ex parte allows information reported for other programs, such as food assistance, within three months of a member's renewal date to be used to automatically renew eligibility for Medicaid.

For more information, please contact Kristen Pieper, CKF Special Projects Assistant and Coordinator, at kristen@cchn.org.