HOW MEDICAID EXPANSION WOULD BENEFIT FLORIDA:
A Guide for Understanding Florida’s Medicaid Program and How to Improve It

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SECTION 1:
Understanding Florida's Medicaid Program Today
What is Medicaid?

• Medicaid is a public health insurance program for low-income people. It was started in 1965. In Florida, Medicaid insurance covers mostly children, pregnant women, parents, seniors over age 65 and people with disabilities.

• In Florida, nearly 4 million people have health coverage through Medicaid.

• Medicaid is jointly funded through federal and state dollars and administered by the state. Every $1 Florida spends on Medicaid is matched by $1.56 in federal funds.
Florida Medicaid plays an important role in health coverage. In Florida, Medicaid covers:

- 1 in 9 adults, ages 19-64
- 3 in 7 children
- 4 in 7 nursing home residents
- 1 in 3 people with disabilities
- 1 in 5 Medicare beneficiaries
LARGEST SHARE OF FLORIDA MEDICAID ENROLLEES ARE CHILDREN

- 61.6% Children*
- 7.5% People who are blind and people w/disabilities
- 11.3% Seniors 65+
- 19.7% Adults

*Adults and children who do not have a disability
Who qualifies for Medicaid in Florida?

- Coverage categories and income eligibility levels determine who can receive coverage.
- Each of the coverage groups have varying income eligibility thresholds based on the poverty level set forth by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
UNDERSTANDING FLORIDA’S MEDICAID PROGRAM

FLORIDA’S MEDICAID INCOME ELIGIBILITY LIMIT AS A SHARE OF THE FPL

Thresholds based on 100% of the poverty level. In 2020 for a family of three, that is $21,720.

- **Parents/Caretakers**: 31% of the FPL ($6,924)
- **Pregnant Women**: 196% of the FPL ($42,588)
- **Children (6-18)**: 138% of the FPL ($29,988)
- **Children (1-5)**: 145% of the FPL ($31,512)
- **Children (0-1)**: 211% of the FPL ($45,840)

Note: Eligibility for children, parents, and pregnant women include Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI)-converted income standards and a disregard equal to 5 percentage points of the FPL. In determining eligibility for pregnant women, household size includes each anticipated unborn child.

Thresholds based on 100% of the poverty level. In 2020, for a single person, that is $12,768.

- **Seniors and People with Disabilities**: 88% of the FPL ($11,472) [Long-term services and support]

$28,188
Florida has very restrictive Medicaid eligibility

Low Income Parents:

• Only five states in the nation make it harder for working parents to get Medicaid. If a family of three lives in Florida and has annual income above $6,924, the parents are ineligible for Medicaid.

• Maintaining eligibility is a high-wire act. Just a little overtime or a promotion with a slightly higher salary could make them ineligible, even when an employer doesn't offer health insurance coverage.

Adults without children:

• No matter how low their income, these adults are not eligible for Florida Medicaid.
Medicaid is a lifeline for families when the economy is down. Lessons learned from the Great Recession between 2008 and 2009:

- # jobs decreased from 8.4M to 8.1M
- # of residents covered by employer-sponsored health insurance decreased from 9.4M to 8.9M
- 330,000 jobs
- 500,000 people

- # of uninsured people increased from 3.5M to 4M
- Medicaid/Children’s Health Insurance Program enrollment increased from 2.3M to 2.6M
- 300,000 people
- 500,000 people
Medicaid controls costs

• Since 1999, the cost of Medicaid per enrollee has grown much slower than the cost of Medicare and private insurance per enrollee. There are even times when Medicaid’s growth in spending per enrollee has been negative. Cost-containment measures in Medicaid have kept growth in spending per enrollee low.
GROWTH IN SPENDING PER MEDICAID ENROLLEE HAS BEEN COMPARABLE TO, OR LOWER THAN THAT FOR, PRIVATE INSURANCE

Spending growth (%)

-5%  0%  5%  10%  15%  20%


- Medicaid
- Medicare
- Private
SECTION 2:
Florida’s Opportunity to Expand Medicaid
FLORIDA’S OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND MEDICAID

Coverage gap

• Prior to COVID-19, there were 391,000 Floridians in the coverage gap. Due to job loss since the pandemic, it's projected that an additional 351,000 Floridians will fall into the gap. (Total: 742,000) They cannot meet Florida's very restrictive Medicaid eligibility requirements, but their income is below the poverty level, so they do not qualify for tax credits to help them buy coverage in the marketplace.

• Those in the gap include adults without children, parents/caretakers and people with disabilities (see next page).
FLORIDA’S OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND MEDICAID

Eligible for Medicaid

COVERAGE GAP

Qualifies for Marketplace Subsidies

 Adults without Children
Income < $12,767

Parents/Caretakers
$6,925 - $21,720*

People with Disabilities
$11,472 - $12,760

*family of 3
FLORIDA’S OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND MEDICAID

Closing the gap and expanding Medicaid coverage

• Florida lawmakers could close the coverage gap by increasing Medicaid income eligibility for all adults (18-64) with income up to 138 percent of the poverty level. This is equal to an annual income of $17,604 for an individual and $29,976 for parents in a family of three in 2020.

• As of April 2020, 37 states, including D.C., have adopted Medicaid expansion. This includes Louisiana, Arkansas, Kentucky, Virginia and West Virginia.
WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM MEDICAID EXPANSION?

Income as a percentage of poverty level

- Adults without Children: 138%
- Parents: 31% Newly eligible, 138% Currently eligible
- Adults with Disabilities: 88% Newly eligible, 138% Currently eligible

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Who would benefit? Low-income uninsured Floridians

Medicaid expansion would significantly reduce the number of adult Floridians without health care coverage. Projections for 2021, which include newly uninsured Floridians due to loss of employer-sponsored insurance (ages 19-64) who fall into the coverage gap:

- 1.2 million Floridians could gain coverage.**
- 29% reduction in the number of uninsured Floridians

**This number includes newly uninsured adults in the coverage gap (below poverty), and uninsured adults prior to the pandemic with income up to 138% of poverty. It also includes 42,000 adults who are currently eligible for Medicaid but are not enrolled.

For a county-by-county breakdown of the uninsured up to 100% of the poverty level, see: https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/fact-sheet-who-are-the-remaining-uninsured#states;12
Who would benefit?

Florida parents and children

• Low-income, uninsured parents would gain coverage. Children are more likely to be insured and get preventive health care when their parents are covered. And the entire family would have financial protection against large medical debt and bankruptcy.

Florida women

• There are more than 184,000 Florida women in the coverage gap. (This figure does not include projections of newly uninsured due to 2020 job loss). When insured, women are more likely to get needed preventative, primary and specialty care services, like mammograms, Pap tests, timely blood pressure checks, maternity care and mental health services.
Who would benefit? Florida veterans

About 105,000 Florida veterans live below the poverty level. Those with or without VA benefits would be eligible for expanded Medicaid.

• Providing coverage for poor veterans dramatically improves health care for all veterans, reducing hospital days by 5% and outpatient clinic appointments by 10%.

• These reductions would open more VA health care resources for use by VA-eligible veterans of all ages.
Who would benefit?

Florida communities of color

• More than 50% of adults left in the coverage gap because of Florida's refusal to expand Medicaid are also people of color.

• Nationally, 27% of poor, uninsured Hispanic adults and 14% of poor, uninsured Black adults live in Florida.

Florida workers

• Workers losing their employed sponsored coverage, working adults who are not offered coverage through their jobs or cannot afford it. Medicaid coverage makes it easier for workers to keep a job or search for one.
FLORIDA’S OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND MEDICAID

DISTRIBUTION OF POOR NONELDERLY UNINSURED ADULTS IN THE COVERAGE GAP BY RACE/ETHNICITY

White
- FL 18%
- NC 9%
- GA 6%
- TX 19%
- Other 48%

Black
- FL 14%
- LA 11%
- TX 16%
- GA 19%
- Other 39%

Hispanic
- FL 27%
- Other 22%
- TX 52%

Total: 1.4 million
Total: 900,000
Total: 700,000
Who would benefit? Rural communities

While Medicaid expansion would reduce the uninsured rate for residents across the entire state, the most dramatic improvements would likely be felt in small towns and rural areas of Florida.

- The uninsured rate for low-income Floridians in these areas is 13 percentage points higher than metro areas (37% vs. 24%). In some Florida counties, like Columbia and Jackson, the rates are even higher (40 - 42% range).

- Rural hospitals would also be substantially more financially secure, preventing closures and the loss of a major local employer.
FLORIDA’S OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND MEDICAID

NON-METRO AREAS IN FLORIDA HAVE A GREATER SHARE OF UNINSURED RESIDENTS

- Non-metro: 37%
- Metro: 24%

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Who would benefit? People with mental illness and substance use disorders (SUDs) and victims of the opioid epidemic

• Expansion states have experienced dramatic declines in uninsured hospitalizations for mental illness and SUD, as well as significant increases in medication assistance treatment for opioid addition and other SUD treatment services.

• 513,00 adult Floridians with mental illness are uninsured. Florida ranks 45th in the country for adults with mental illness not receiving treatment.

• Expansion would provide these Floridians access to a comprehensive continuum of physical and behavioral health care, essential for their recovery.
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REFERENCES


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SLIDE 22: Ibid (Artiga et al.)

