



**Section 1115 Medicaid Expansion/HELP Demonstration Waiver
Public Forum
(July 29, 2021)**

Waiver Summary:

The 2015 Montana Legislature enacted Senate Bill (SB) 405, the Montana Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) Act, that among other features, provides for the expansion of health care services through the Medicaid HELP Program to new adults ages 19-64 years old and below 138 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). HELP Program coverage was effective January 1, 2016 and the State implemented its expansion through a Section 1115 demonstration waiver from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

The Section 1115 waiver authorized:

- 12 months of continuous eligibility for all new adults;
- Premiums for new adults participating in the Third Party Administrator (TPA) equal to 2% of their household income; and
- Maximum copayments allowable under federal law, with total cost sharing not to exceed 5% of a beneficiary's household income.

After the implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 261 in August 2017, DPHHS had four months to implement contract closure with BCBSMT by December 31, 2017 and transition HELP Program administration to the Department by January 1, 2018. This required Waiver changes:

- Update the 1115 Waiver to remove references the TPA;
- Update the 1115 Waiver to remove the 2% premium credit;
- End the 1915b Waiver that allowed the Department to use a TPA for administration of the HELP Plan.

• **2019 Updates**

- House Bill (HB) 658, the Medicaid Reform and Integrity Act, was passed as part of the 2019 Legislative Session. HB 658 continues the state's Medicaid expansion and directs DPHHS to request federal Demonstration approval to implement new Medicaid expansion program features. DPHHS is seeking to amend and extend its current 1115 Waiver to:
 - Condition Medicaid coverage on compliance with work/community engagement requirements; and
 - Apply a premium structure that gradually increases enrollee premiums based on coverage duration.
- A draft of the federal evaluation of the Montana 1115 Waiver was released in July of 2019. DPHHS intends to continue participation in the federal evaluation through federal fiscal year



- 2019. DPHHS intends to contract with an independent third party to evaluate the updated Demonstration.
- An application to amend and extend its current 1115 Waiver was submitted August 30, 2019. The current authorities were due to expire December 31, 2020.
- **2020 Updates**
 - For all claims paid on or after January 1, 2020, there is no longer a copayment charge.
 - Effective April 1, 2020, for the duration of the COVID-19 state of emergency, a temporary moratorium on non-voluntary disenrollments was implemented.
 - On December 1, 2020, CMS extended the current authorities through December 31, 2021. The application to amend and extend the current authorities is now under CMS consideration.
- **2021 Updates**
 - As directed by statute, in June of 2021, Montana began the process to amend the Medicaid Expansion/HELP waiver to remove the 12 months of continuous eligibility provided for under this waiver. The process is currently in the public comment period, ending at midnight, August 31, 2021. The first of two public hearings was held yesterday, with statewide virtual access and this meeting today serves as the second.
 - Based on CMS' withdrawal of other states' 1115 waivers with work/community engagement requirements, CMS has communicated to DPHHS that **a five-year extension of the Medicaid expansion waiver will not include work/community engagement requirements (premium increases in HB 658 were tied to work requirements)**.
 - We expect to receive **formal guidance from CMS in the fall of 2021** with a final approved waiver amendment and extension **prior to December 31, 2021**.
- **Key Milestones and Accomplishments**
 - Preventive Care
 - The expansion of Medicaid in Montana has been an opportunity to dramatically improve the health of the state by incentivizing primary and preventive care. To promote use of high value health services, even from the beginning, the state did not apply copayments for preventive health care services. As of December 31, 2020, the ten most commonly used preventive services, excluding pharmaceuticals, are below:

Preventive Service - 2020	Unduplicated Number of Clients - 2020
Dental Preventive	26,882
Cholesterol Screening	16,282
Diabetes Screening	12,962



Preventive Service - 2020	Unduplicated Number of Clients - 2020
Preventive/Wellness Exams	12,703
Vaccines	12,033
Chlamydia Screening	9,620
Gonorrhea Screening	9,546
Colorectal Cancer Screening	8,212
Cervical Cancer Screening	7,385
Depression	7,159

- **Participant Enrollment**

- The HELP enrollment began 2020 with 91,065 members (as of the first of January) and ended the year with 96,935, nearly a **6.5%** increase over the twelve months. Additionally, as of June 1, 2021, 100,618 members were enrolled in Medicaid expansion. This is **9.6%** of Montana’s population and a **9.5%** increase in members since the beginning of 2020. During the COVID-19 state of emergency, beginning March 2020, the suspension of involuntary dis-enrollments is a contributing factor in this increase. The COVID-19 related job losses and small business profit reductions likely increased the pool of eligible HELP applications. Montana continues to focus on ensuring the barriers to individuals accessing care are addressed.

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