

PROTECT OUR CARE

FACT SHEET: Closing The Medicaid Coverage Gap Helps Millions Of Americans

Closing the Medicaid coverage gap will provide millions of Americans living in non-expansion states access to quality, affordable health coverage. Closing the Medicaid coverage gap will reduce racial inequities in health care, strengthen families, and save lives.

2.2 Million Americans Currently Denied Medicaid Will Gain Health Coverage. There are [more than two million](#) Americans currently trapped in the Medicaid coverage gap to access zero dollar premium health coverage. Of those currently in the coverage gap, [62 percent](#) are in the labor force, [30 percent](#) are parents with children at home, more than [25 percent](#) are essential workers, and [15 percent](#) of adults have a disability.

Drastically Reducing Racial Health Disparities. Closing the Medicaid coverage gap is the single most important policy to expand coverage and reduce racial inequities in the American health care system. People of color are more likely to have a lower median [income](#) and live in a state [without Medicaid](#) expansion, compared with their white counterparts. In 2019, [60 percent](#) of individuals in the coverage gap were people of color.

Medicaid Covers More People Now Than Ever

Medicaid Enrollment Increased Amid The COVID-19 Pandemic. According to data from CMS, Medicaid/CHIP enrollment has [increased](#) by 15.1 million or more than 21 percent between February 2020 and November 2021. The continuous coverage provision included in the Public Health Emergency has allowed [millions](#) of people to stay covered without churn, or disenrollment and reenrollment. If legislation or the PHE is not extended by July 2022, states will begin the process of reviewing enrollees for continued eligibility.

Medicaid Expansion Saves Lives

Medicaid Improves Health Outcomes And Reduces Mortality. A study published in the Journal of Health Economics found that Medicaid expansion reduced mortality in people aged 20 to 64 by [3.6 percent](#). Medicaid expansion also saved the lives of [19,200 older adults](#) aged 55 to 64 between 2014 and 2017. At the same time, 15,600 older adults died prematurely as a result of their states' decision not to expand the program.

Expansion Increases Access To Preventive Care And Life Saving Treatments. Through Medicaid expansion, uninsured adults can gain access to preventive care and treatments such as [colon cancer screenings](#), [affordable diabetes medication](#), and [mental health and addiction treatment](#).

Tackling Income Inequality And Medical Debt. Medicaid expansion under the ACA caused a [significant](#) reduction in poverty and reduced income inequality across the board by more than [5 percent](#). In states that have expanded Medicaid, the chance of accruing medical debt is [20 percent](#) lower than non-expansion states. Additionally, a 2018 National Bureau of Economic Research analysis found that Medicaid expansion led to a [nearly \\$6 billion](#) decline in unpaid medical bills and to higher credit scores.

Medicaid Expansion Reduces Income Inequality and Lowers Health Costs

Reduced Income Inequality And Medical Debt. Medicaid expansion under the ACA caused a [“significant”](#) reduction in poverty and reduced income inequality across the board by [5.3 percent](#). In states that have expanded Medicaid, the chance of accruing medical debt is [20 percent](#) lower than non-expansion states. Additionally, a 2018 National Bureau of Economic Research analysis found that Medicaid expansion led to a [nearly \\$6 billion decline in unpaid medical bills](#) and to higher credit scores.