

States Recognized for Medicaid Program Innovations

Six states honored by RWJF and the National Academy for State Health Policy with 2022 Medicaid Innovation Award.

September 14, 2022

Princeton, N.J.—Medicaid programs in Arizona, California, Kentucky, Minnesota, North Carolina, and West Virginia received the 2022 Medicaid Innovation Award, presented by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP). The nonpartisan award recognizes states for demonstrating creativity, leadership, and progress in their Medicaid programs despite significant public health challenges in recent years.

Medicaid is a joint state-federal health insurance program that covers one in five people in the United States, including elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities, and 40% of all children. In partnership with the federal government, states can tailor and enhance their Medicaid programs to meet the unique needs of their residents.

Selected by a panel of expert advisers, Medicaid Innovation Award recipients are Medicaid agency leaders who implemented or enhanced initiatives that demonstrate innovative and unique approaches to improving the health and lives of Medicaid enrollees. Awards were given in six categories:

- **Enrollment Innovations: Kentucky** implemented a range of measures during the COVID-19 pandemic to simplify Medicaid enrollment and increase access to coverage including targeted, data-driven marketing and outreach; a simplified application; and coordination with other state agencies.
- **Improving Access to Care: North Carolina** developed a maternal/perinatal telehealth policy during the COVID-19 pandemic that provided telehealth and home visit care to patients; provided reimbursement to perinatal providers for remote blood pressure monitoring, physiological monitoring, and lactation services; and conducted postpartum depression screenings by video, phone, and online portal messaging.
- **Initiatives to Address Social Determinants of Health: Arizona** developed its Whole Person Care Initiative, which offers a range of support services to enrollees including transitional housing; referrals for and transportation to community-based services such as employment and food assistance; and long-term care services to reduce social isolation.
- **Care Coordination Initiatives for Vulnerable Populations: West Virginia** launched a program for children in foster care that reduces fragmentation and provides a continuum of acute services, delivers needed services in the most integrated and cost-effective way possible, and ensures quality across services.
- **Addressing Health Disparities: Minnesota** engaged community members to inform recommendations on how to address racial equity for Black Minnesotans. The recommendations address enrollment and renewal, increasing access to culturally relevant care, and engaging communities and families served by the program.
- **Promising or Emerging Initiatives: California** introduced an initiative to address complex challenges such as homelessness; insufficient access to behavioral healthcare; and caring

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for children with complex medical conditions, justice-involved individuals, and the growing aging population. The initiative supports non-clinical interventions to address social determinants of health and reduce disparities and inequities.

“The federal-state Medicaid partnership enables states to develop tailored, creative solutions to local challenges, and when faced with an unprecedented pandemic, Medicaid leaders dug deep to develop innovative approaches to care,” said Tara Oakman, interim managing director at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “While it remains a difficult period for Medicaid programs, all states can learn from successes in other states in improving Medicaid access, care delivery, and equity.”

The recognized states demonstrate diversity in political composition, geography, and state Medicaid program size and were honored at NASHP’s annual conference in Seattle.

“We are so pleased to recognize state Medicaid programs that have creatively addressed significant challenges over the past few years to meet the needs of their residents,” said Hemi Tewarson, executive director at the National Academy for State Health Policy. “We hope these state efforts can provide ideas and inspiration for other states.”

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR STATE HEALTH POLICY

The National Academy for State Health Policy is a nonpartisan organization committed to developing and advancing state health policy innovations and solutions. NASHP provides a unique forum for the productive exchange of strategies across state government, including the executive and legislative branches. For more information, visit www.nashp.org (<https://www.nashp.org/>).

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