

2023 was a year of extraordinary change for AHCCCS. The agency welcomed a new Cabinet Executive Officer and restructured to better focus on systems and operational enhancements. We addressed an unprecedented fraudulent billing scheme that jeopardized member safety and, as the pandemic ended, we returned to regular renewals and began the 12-month process to determine eligibility for all 2.5 million AHCCCS members.

UNWINDING FROM THE PANDEMIC AND RETURN TO REGULAR RENEWALS

- **Renewed eligibility for more than 1.2 million AHCCCS members**, maintained a monthly dashboard of renewal progress, and built an interactive zip code map of areas most at risk of procedural disenrollment.
- Launched **AHCCCS Connect**, a text/email/phone communication tool that follows an applicant through their Medicaid lifecycle and alerts them of decisions and responses needed.
- Deployed Arizona's **12-month strategic plan** to ensure a smooth return to regular renewal process, aligning more than 2.5 million member households with SNAP benefit renewals when possible and initiating more than 1 million member contact touchpoints.
- To unwind pandemic flexibilities for providers, AHCCCS initiated **re-registration of more than 52,000** providers in the AHCCCS Provider Enrollment Portal (APEP).
- **Launched SAM**, a chatbot on www.healtharizonaplus.gov who can answer more than 80 renewal questions in English and Spanish, update a member's contact information, and transfer a chat to a live agent during business hours.

MEMBER AND PROVIDER SERVICES

- Launched the **Arizona Perinatal Access Line** to provide real time perinatal psychiatric consultation to primary care practitioners serving pregnant and postpartum members.
- Launched **Targeted Investments 2.0 program** to incentivize providers to develop and enhance comprehensive whole person care systems that address health related social needs; partners at Arizona State University Targeted Investment Program Quality Improvement Collaborative (TIPQIC) received the ASU President's Social Embeddedness Award.
- **Addressed organized, fraudulent Medicaid behavioral health billing** with numerous operational and administrative system changes to strengthen program security; suspended more than 300 providers for credible allegations of fraud and launched a member assistance hotline that served more than 7,000 individuals.
- Designed and implemented the **Free and Reduced School Lunch data match** with the Arizona Department of Education to facilitate automatically enrolling students in free and reduced-price lunch plans without requiring an application.
- Created the Direct Service Workforce (DSW) Learning Collaborative and partnered with the Arizona's community colleges, Association of Training & Development, PipelineAZ, Arizona Board of Nursing, and Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association to **launch workforce development programs** to address future health care worker needs.
- Provided free **ECSII training and access** for providers, case managers, and support staff to support healthy early childhood development.
- Provided **permanent supportive housing to more than 2,300 Arizonans** with Serious Mental Illness (SMI) and General Mental Health and/or Substance Use Disorder designations.
- Created a new **Olmstead Plan** outlining the agency's priorities regarding members at risk of institutionalization.
- **Aligned the Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) determination** process for children with the SMI determination process for adults.

- Reformed **Tribal Consultation process** to allow for greater input from tribal leaders and governments.
- Reformed **Peer Support Training Programs** to incorporate national standards.
- Successfully procured and implemented a **Third Party Liability (TPL) vendor**.
- Conducted multiple rate studies, **rebased rates** for Federally Qualified Health Centers, and established set Fee-for-Service rates for specific services that historically had paid a percentage of the billed amount.
- Created the **AHCCCS Block Grant Manual** which provides a clear explanation of grants and their requirements.
- Office of Human Rights created a **monthly community stakeholder training series** on advocacy topics related to rights for individuals with a SMI designation.
- **Awarded \$17 million** to more than 60 Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) providers and opened a second round of grants to award another \$47.5 million in 2024.
- Disseminated **\$368.23 million of American Rescue Plan funding** through MCOs to 3,930 HCBS organizations.

WAIVER, POLICY, AND COVERED SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

- Extended coverage to women for up to **12 months postpartum** and added **Rapid Whole Genome Sequencing** for children as a covered service.
- Compiled the agency's **largest-ever stakeholder response** in support of 1115 Waiver submittal to pay parents for the services they provide to their minor children with disabilities, and to expand the upper income limit of KidsCare.
- Awarded **new contracts to two new health plans** to serve members enrolled in the Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCs) who are elderly or living with disabilities. Beginning 10/1/24, for the first time in the ALTCs-EPD program, all enrolled members will have a choice of health plans.
- Completed **Auditor General's Sunset Review** and received legislative authority to continue the agency.
- Allowed **Certified Community Health Workers and Community Health Representatives** to be reimbursed for AHCCCS covered services.

TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENTS

- Released the **strategic roadmap to modernize the Medicaid Enterprise System**; began implementation of a system integrator environment and began implementation of ServiceNow, an agency-wide helpdesk ticketing system.
- **Updated Quality Management Special Assistance Portal** to ensure Health Care Decision Makers receive the information and resources they need.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT, RETENTION, AND SUPPORT

- Received the **Healthy Arizona Workplace designation** for the fifth consecutive year.
- Offered numerous **employee development training programs** in conflict of interest training, compassion fatigue, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging, three-tiered coaching approaches, and virtual leadership.
- Developed and published a **Provider Enrollment manual** to provide consistent support and guidance to staff making provider enrollment determinations.
- **Restructured Office of the General Counsel Legal Services** to align with the AHCCCS: Growing Together reorganization.
- Improved an agency process to **determine Good Cause exceptions** to Credible Allegation of Fraud (CAF) payment suspensions.
- Issued approximately five times the number of **final agency action decisions** over the previous year.