

Medicaid in the District of Columbia

A Brief Overview

What is Medicaid?

- Medicaid is a health insurance program for low-income children and adults. It provides comprehensive health and long-term care coverage for many D.C. residents.

Who is Eligible for Medicaid?

- Low-income pregnant woman, children and their caregivers, elderly or disabled individuals are eligible. Recipients must meet income and asset requirements.
- Recipients must be citizens or have been legal permanent residents for more than 5 years.
- *D.C. Healthy Families*, D.C.'s Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), extends Medicaid coverage to children under 19 and their caregivers in families who make up to 300% of the federal poverty line (currently \$61,950 for a family of four).

How Many People Are on Medicaid?

- Medicaid covers approximately 142,000 people in D.C. – 24% of all D.C. residents and 60% of children in the city.
- About half of Medicaid beneficiaries are children under 18.
- An estimated 10,400 of D.C.'s children (8.9%) are uninsured. 76% of these children are Medicaid eligible.

What Does Medicaid Cover?

- Medicaid offers a comprehensive package of benefits including inpatient hospital care, outpatient physician visits, emergency services, prescription drugs, mental health care, rehabilitative services, home health care and dental and vision services.
- In addition to all listed services, children have an extensive right to any services that are “medically necessary” based on a provision of the federal Medicaid law (the Early and Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) requirement).
- Many services that young children (age birth-3) receive through Early Intervention Services are also paid for by Medicaid. Services include screenings and assessments, and physical, speech and occupational therapy.

How is Medicaid Structured?

- Most recipients select a managed care organization (MCO) through which to receive their benefits. There is specific MCO for children with special needs.
- Some individuals (children in foster care, the elderly, disabled) receive direct fee-for-service care rather than going through a MCO.

How is Medicaid Funded?

- Medicaid is jointly funded by the federal government and D.C.
- The federal government pays 70% of total cost of D.C.'s Medicaid program. Every dollar D.C. spends is matched by \$2.33 from the federal government.
- Medicaid is the single largest source of federal funding to D.C. In FY07, D.C. received about \$900 million from the federal government for its Medicaid program.

