

State Government

May 4, 2022

State moves to expand health care access

Currently, 1.4 million Oregonians are enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) which has seen a boom in enrollments during the pandemic to the tune of 300,000. Under the current federal public health emergency, Medicaid redeterminations for eligibility have been put on hold. This means that during the pandemic, anyone enrolled in Medicaid could not lose access to health insurance coverage. As a result, Oregon has the lowest ever uninsured rate in state history. And the numbers are stark for people of color. For example, the uninsured numbers in the African American community have dropped from 8.2 to 5 percent.

When the federal public health emergency expires, which is slated for July 15, 2022, states will have 14 months to redetermine the eligibility of all Medicaid enrollees. According to the Oregon Health Authority that could result in as many as 300,000 Oregonians losing access to health care coverage.

[House Bill 4035](#) (2022) established a Task Force that will determine how to provide health care insurance to Oregonians whose income is too high to qualify for Medicaid yet are still considered low-income. The [Bridge Program Task Force](#) is charged with developing a proposal to provide affordable insurance coverage for this group (OHA estimates 85,000 Oregonians) who regularly enroll and disenroll in Medicaid as their income fluctuates.

Federal Regulatory Update

Surprise billing / Good faith estimate update

Thank you to everyone who responded to OPCA's GFE survey! NACHC sent the [memorandum](#) last week, which detailed operational solutions that keep in mind health center program requirements, to ensure we meet GFE requirements and goals. NACHC is awaiting a follow-up meeting from CMS once they review the memorandum and data.

Capitol Hill

Congress seeks a pathway forward on COVID-19 supplemental funding

As Congress returns from recess, Senate Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) is looking for a [pathway forward to pass \\$10 billion in funding](#) for coronavirus relief. The package faces Senate opposition because of President Biden's upcoming decision to lift Title 42

restrictions. Title 42 is a COVID-19-related restriction that blocks migrants from seeking asylum at the U.S.-Mexico border. Republican Senators want to include an amendment to continue Title 42. On Monday, April 25, 2022, a federal judge temporarily blocked the Biden Administration from ending [Title 42](#) restrictions, and the Administration is contemplating next steps. Democrats are exploring whether to tie COVID-19 funding with additional funding for Ukraine to secure bipartisan-bicameral support.