



Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign

Back-to-School with Medicaid and CHIP: Ensuring Kids are Covered, Vaccinated and Ready to Learn

WEBINAR TRANSCRIPT | JULY 26, 2022

Helen Gaynor: Well, good afternoon, everyone. And welcome to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign webinar, Back-to-School with Medicaid and CHIP, Ensuring Kids are Covered, Vaccinated, and Ready to Learn. My name's Helen Gaynor from Porter Novelli Public Services, and I work closely with the campaign and the team at CMS as a contractor to support education and outreach to families eligible for free or low-cost health coverage through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP. And I'm really excited to be moderating the discussion today. So, we do have a great lineup of speakers ready to talk about the back-to-school season, which is an important time to connect with families to share enrollment information regarding Medicaid and CHIP, highlight key benefits like vaccinations, which we'll dive deeper into today, and underscore the need for beneficiaries to renew coverage once states resume normal eligibility and enrollment operations upon the conclusion of the Public Health Emergency. So, we'll be sharing an in-depth overview of resources to support partners and grantees and states during this season.

Helen Gaynor: Before I transition over for an official welcome, I do want to touch on a few housekeeping items. So, if you've joined this webinar on the WebEx desktop platform, you'll see a few features that will be helpful to you during today's presentation. We encourage you to submit any questions you have into the Q and A or chat box, which should be on the right side of your screen. Just make sure when you're sending questions that you send them to all panelists. So, there may be a default option to send a question to one person, but we will be collecting all of the questions to ask at the end of the webinar in a designated Q and A session, and want to make sure that we're able to collect all of the questions at the end of the presentation. Depending on what the question is, we'll respond in the chat if it's a quick answer for somebody on the webinar team, or we will hold the questions for the panelists at the end. For any questions that we are not able to get to today, we will make sure to follow up with individuals separately after the webinar via email. So, this webinar is being recorded and we will be posting the recording and the presentation deck to InsureKidsNow.gov in the coming weeks. So, thank you again for being here today. I'd now like to introduce Amy Lutzky, Deputy Director in the Children and Adult Health Programs Group at CMS, for an official welcome.

Amy Lutzky: Thank you so much, Helen. And hello everyone, and welcome to today's webinar. While we're still in the middle of summer, and gosh, many of us are really in the throes of a heat wave, it is not too early to begin our back-to-school outreach initiative. Since this really is the time of year when health coverage becomes top of mind for many parents and caregivers as they start thinking about scheduling checkups and sports physicals before the school year begins. We hope the families are more energized than ever to schedule with their providers, because we know that during much of the COVID-19 pandemic, many families missed screenings and childhood vaccines. Although we are seeing some of those utilization rates pick up, they are still below pre-pandemic levels for a number of services, which is why we're going to start off our webinar today with Dr. Peacock, from the CDC, who will be talking about catching up on routine childhood immunizations.

Amy Lutzky: The National Campaign has a number of resources focused on catching up on missed care, as well as other initiatives, including back-to-school, which we will also be discussing today. In addition, we'll be providing an overview of our website redesign so it will be easier for you to find these resources. We also love featuring our partner organizations, particularly Connecting Kids to Coverage grantees, and so we will be hearing from the Virginia Healthcare Foundation today on their back-to-school initiative and use of campaign resources. And for our final presentation, we will be talking about preparing for when the Public Health Emergency ends and states resume normal business operations, including conducting eligibility renewals. While the Connecting Kids to Coverage Campaign is always focused on retention in addition to outreach, we will be highlighting the important role partners can play in emphasizing the need for beneficiaries to update their contact information, check the mail, and complete their renewal to help avoid a gap in Medicaid or CHIP coverage. Helen, passing back to you so we can kick things off.

Helen Gaynor: Awesome. Thanks so much, Amy. I'd now like to introduce our first panelist, Dr. Georgina Peacock, Director of the Immunization Services Division at the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at the CDC. Dr. Peacock, when you're ready.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: Great. Thanks for having me here today. First, thank you all for inviting me to talk to you about some of the work that we've been doing related to the back-to-school season with an emphasis on routine immunizations, and also some emphasis on COVID-19 vaccines. So, I'm going to be sharing some information from our website, some of the materials that we've developed, as well as some of the data that's contributing to how we've come up with these activities. So, as you can see here, as a reminder, and I think all of you know, that the foundation for the work that we do for children in the Immunization Services Division is the Vaccines for Children program. And this is this really important building block for the immunization program that if you look at vaccines for children born between 1994 and 2018 has prevented 419 million illnesses and saved nearly 1.9 trillion in total societal costs.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: So, to give you some context, I wanted to talk first about the impact of COVID-19 pandemic and the impact that it has had on routine vaccinations. So as a general background, as you know, vaccines are good for reducing disease, and one of the things that increase higher coverage is school entry requirements. So, one of the things that we do is that CDC works with state immunization programs to monitor kindergarten vaccine coverage. And then we also look at other data sources to look at orders, so orders related to the Vaccines for Children program. We also look at administration data, and that gives us some context by which we can do our planning for things like promoting routine vaccination, sorry, or promoting catch up, which is something that we need to be thinking about in this context post-pandemic.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: So, this was a study that we published a couple months ago that really talked about the vaccine coverage or the documentation of vaccination in children that are entering kindergarten in 2020-2021 school year. And what we found was that there was a modest drop, so there was a drop from 95% to 94%, which doesn't sound like a lot, but equates for at least 35,000 children that we didn't have documentation of complete vaccination for against common diseases, such as measles, whooping cough, and chickenpox. In addition, in this study, what we saw was that there was a 10% drop in kindergarten enrollment. Now, remember this was that first year of the pandemic. So, there were 400,000 fewer children that entered kindergarten than we had expected. So, we don't know anything about the vaccine status of those children who didn't enter kindergarten. So, the good news is that routine vaccination coverage remains high and that we can recover lost ground from the pandemic, but we need to keep monitoring that. And so, the next year's data, the 2021, 2022 school year, we will have information about that in the fall.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: So now we've moved on to look at some of our vaccine ordering. This is another way we look at how we're doing related to vaccine coverage. This is a proxy for that. So, this is ordering data from the Vaccine for Children program, and you can see the different levels of provider orders going from FY, fiscal year, 19, all the way through fiscal year 22. Of course, we're not finished with the FY 22 orders yet, so you're only seeing part of a year. And that's why we show in the orange bars what happens in the first part of each fiscal year, so those are the orders from October through June in each of the years. And if you look in these

four bars, you can the fiscal year 19 on the left going all the way over to fiscal year 22 on the right. You can see that we're almost back to where we were ordering wise in the pre-pandemic year of FY 19, but not quite. And you can see that there were those drops in fiscal year 20 and 21.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: This shows you that same data, but in a different way. So, this time you're looking at the orders from fiscal year 19 through 22. The 19 is actually the orange bar that goes across the top, and then in red you'll see the fiscal year 20. In green, you'll see 21, and in purple you'll see 22. And I want to point out that, as you know, we saw significant drops in vaccination in fiscal year 2020, especially in April and May. So, you can see those red bars that are much lower in April and May of 2020. You can also see that in the purple we seem to be coming back, but we're not quite back to baseline, which is that line that was on the top that was our pre-pandemic year. So again, we are monitoring orders. We are feeling positive that are Vaccines for Children orders are going up, but that's something that we still need to monitor. And we're working with our Vaccine for Children providers to make sure that they are encouraging vaccination.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: So, moving on to routine childhood vaccination, what are the things that we can do? So, this is some of the work that we've been doing with a Let's Play Catch Up on Routine Vaccines campaign with the goal to encourage parents, especially low-income families, to prioritize the need to catch up their children on routine childhood vaccinations. The targets of this campaign are children aged zero to six, with an emphasis on three to six, who have delayed doctor's visits. And there's a specific outreach that has been tailored to African American parents. This has really been based on some formative research that we've done, and the channels for this include news media, digital, and social media, and partnership engagement. And you can see the resources that are listed below on the CDC website where you can go to a website for parents, one for partner resources, and then a toolkit for clinicians.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: So, these are just some of the pictures that you can see, or some of the images that are in the Let's Play Catch Up on Routine Vaccines campaign. So, what do we know about how we can get children caught up on recommended vaccines? Well, we know that healthcare systems and healthcare providers are key to this, so they can identify families whose children have missed doses and contact them to schedule appointments, they can prompt clinicians when these children are seen to deliver vaccines that are due or overdue, and they can let families know what precautions are in place for safe delivery of inpatient services. I know we're not seeing as much of that now, but certainly earlier in the pandemic, people were cautious about going to see their providers. So, the important thing to do is continue to encourage those well-child visits and really getting caught up on those recommended vaccines. So, these messages are included in a call-to-action that is going out from CDC, from, actually, the NCIRD director, so my director, to health systems and healthcare providers to, again, encourage that catch up on routine vaccines.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: So, a brief message about COVID-19 vaccination, while that is not a routine vaccination, we know that also there is encouragement of giving COVID-19 vaccinations to all those children over six months who are now eligible. As a reminder, the last group of people that needed to receive eligibility for COVID vaccination received that on June 16th, so those children either aged six months to 17 years with two doses of Moderna, or six months to four years recovered with a three-dose regimen or primary series from Pfizer. And so that vaccination process is happening now, in some cases that is being done with routine vaccinations, and in some cases that is being done in other places, depending on where you are in the country.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: So, what are our goals? I mean, our goals are to make sure that vaccine providers and other healthcare professionals are able to have those informed conversations with parents and caregivers. We know that this has been a very complicated time in the pandemic. There probably is more hesitancy than we've seen in a while. And having those one-on-one conversations is really important. The research still shows that having one-on-one conversations with trusted healthcare providers is definitely one way to increase vaccination. So, these are some of the ways that we have been reaching children, specifically with the COVID vaccine, but I think it's important, and the reason I included this slide, was to just think about all of those different people that care for young children. And there are places who can be reached to help promote

vaccination. So, in the COVID outreach, we've been working, like I had already said, with primary care providers, but also with federal entities, like children that are cared for within the Department of Defense programs, Indian Health Service, federally qualified health centers, public health programs, commercial pharmacies, and then even working with places like Head Start and early childhood education as promoters of the importance of vaccine. Some of these sites are actually providing vaccination, but others can actually speak to parents about the importance of whether it's routine vaccination or COVID vaccination.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: So, here's just a little bit more information about some of those places where children may be getting a lot of care in their early years. So, we have worked with organizations such as Child Care Aware, Head Start, WIC programs to make sure that they also have the messaging that they can provide to parents and caregivers about the importance of routine vaccination. They also are groups that can link children to vaccine providers, or to healthcare providers, who provide both well-child visits and vaccinations. So, this is a place where you can go on the CDC website to look at routine childhood vaccination coverage. So, it's interactive. You can go and you can look at different places in the country, you can look at different vaccines, and really tailor that to what you're trying to look for. So, it's an interactive website, ChildVaxView, and I encourage you to go on that if you are interested in getting into some of the specifics about what we know about national vaccine coverage.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: So, these next slides... And I think that you will be provided these slides as a resource. So, the web links are included in all of these slides. On the CDC website, there are resources for providers and caregivers, a toolkit for clinicians, and this helps them with that encouragement of catch up. So that matches that Let's Play Catch Up campaign that I was telling you about. And so, this is the toolkit that helps clinicians and provide some resources for them on that.

Dr. Georgina Peacock: And again, more resources. And we can go through these quite quickly. I just wanted to show you that there is a breadth of different resources on the website at CDC that we would be happy to walk you through further or happy for you to access. Next slide. One thing that I'd like to point out about this is that we do know that school-led vaccination clinics, especially in the back-to-school time, are a good way to help children catch up on vaccines. And so, this is some information on how to promote vaccination through these school-led vaccination clinics. Information for parents and caregivers, and finally some additional resources. And so, we can go to the next slide. And I think that's it for the slides that I wanted to show with you. I know at the end, there were a lot of different resources, but I hope that you'll be able to find those. Those have been really made to help both promote routine catch up, and then provide you the resources that you need. So, thanks for having me today, and it was delightful to be here.

Helen Gaynor: Awesome. Thank you so much, Dr. Peacock, for sharing the background on VFC and all of the resources that I know will be super helpful to folks on the line. And just as a reminder, we will be sharing the webinar slides on [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://insurekidsnow.gov) in the next couple of weeks once we have the recording of the webinar as well, which we'll be posting. Also, if you have any questions for Dr. Peacock or throughout the duration of the webinar, please feel free to put them in the Q&A or the chat function, but just a reminder to toggle the settings and send your question to all panelists so that we can collect them and ask questions for the panelists at the end. So, thank you.

Helen Gaynor: Next, I will be sharing an overview of the Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign and resources that may be helpful both during the back-to-school time, and throughout the entire year. So, the Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign reaches out to families with children and teens eligible for Medicaid and CHIP to encourage them to enroll their kids and to raise awareness about the health coverage available under these programs. So, the campaign conducts annual initiatives tied to priority topics, and at times, key times of year. So, these include oral health, mental health, vaccinations, missed care, peace of mind, youth sports, year-round enrollment, back to school, rural communities and multicultural outreach. And this is a full list of our current initiatives, and we are going to dive a little deeper today into a handful of them.

Helen Gaynor: So, our oral health initiative serves as an opportunity to remind families that children enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP have coverage for comprehensive dental services, including checkups, x-rays, fillings, fluoride treatments and more, and resources include digital videos, infographics, posters, and more items that may be helpful in outreach.

Helen Gaynor: Our mental health initiative focuses on raising awareness about the mental and behavioral health services that are covered by Medicaid and CHIP, and encouraging beneficiaries to utilize these services. So, this initiative has been very important, especially as of recently, given that mental health issues are increasing among children. Between 2016 and 2020, mental health issues like anxiety and depression actually increased by about 30%. So, we have a number of resources to share about mental and behavioral health services, including digital videos, social media posts, live read radio scripts and more.

Helen Gaynor: Our vaccine initiative serves to remind families about the important protections that vaccines provide, and encourages parents and caregivers to get their kids vaccinated. So, on the screen, you can see an infographic that is specific to the flu vaccine, and the campaign has additional resources like newsletter templates and digital videos for outreach, both about the flu vaccine, as well as routine vaccinations as well.

Helen Gaynor: We also have resources to help families schedule missed care appointments. So, I know one of the things that Dr. Peacock highlighted was that a lot of kids have fallen behind during the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically on vaccinations, and while we're getting caught up, there's a little bit more catching up to do. So, the campaign does have resources focused on helping families schedule well-child visits and any missed care that their kids may need, especially as we head into the back-to-school season.

Helen Gaynor: Our peace of mind initiative has helpful resources that are good for general outreach throughout the year. They remind families that Medicaid and CHIP can provide peace of mind, but their children have access to comprehensive and essential medical care. So, in addition to our traditional resources like social media posts and palm cards and posters and such, we also have TV and radio PSAs focused on that piece of mind messaging.

Helen Gaynor: And then of course back to school, we have our back-to-school initiative. We are just kicking off sort of today with our back-to-school webinar. And research has shown that students who have health coverage are better able to learn and participate in school activities. So, campaign materials help encourage families to enroll their kids and utilize key services during this back-to-school season, which back-to-school has been a big priority initiative for the campaign for a while, and we're excited to be sharing some updated resources, including a new Back-to-School Toolkit for 2022, which provides social media messages, drop-in articles and more resources for outreach all in one place. And you can find this Back-to-School Toolkit on the back-to-school initiative page of the InsureKidsNow.gov website, which we will go through how to access the materials, and then we'll kind of do a walkthrough of InsureKidsNow.gov later on in the webinar as well.

Helen Gaynor: So, another big priority that is upcoming is the Unwinding of the Public Health Emergency. And the Public Health Emergency temporarily waived certain Medicaid and CHIP requirements, and it's currently extended to October 13th. So, when it does come to an end, states will be required to restart eligibility reviews. So, this year, the campaign will be encouraging beneficiaries to update their contact information so that they don't miss out on important reminders. Resources are available to states, including a communications toolkit and graphics in English and Spanish, which you can find at [Medicaid.gov/Unwinding](https://www.Medicaid.gov/Unwinding), and which will be discussed in depth, in detail later in today's webinar. The campaign also has a variety of resources available to reach families from different cultural groups who may face barriers to enrollment like low literacy, limited access to enrollment assistance and language. So, our latest Immigrant Family Fact Sheet with information on enrollment is available in 24 languages at [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://www.InsureKidsNow.gov). And later this year, we're excited to launch a poster that will focus on mental and behavioral health that will also be translated into those same 24 languages. So, all of the resources are available on the outreach tool library on [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://www.InsureKidsNow.gov). So, everything that we've covered thus far is available in our outreach tool library on our website. It is updated frequently with new materials to help your organization enhance outreach and get more children and families

enrolled. We recently did an update to the outreach tool library and how you can search for resources that we will have a demonstration of later today.

Helen Gaynor: The campaign also has a customization guide that details how organizations can request free customized versions of many campaign resources by adding your organization's name, logo, and any relevant state-specific information. So, to request customization and review available materials, you can visit the outreach tool library where there will be a link to download the customization guide, which will walk through all of the different materials that are available for customization. And after you've decided what pieces would be helpful for your own outreach and that you would like to customize, you can send an email to the CMS Division of Multimedia Services with your requests and your specific information. So, on the side of the screen, you can see some of the examples of where customized information would be put in. So, your program's name, your website or phone number, and up to two logos could potentially be included in customized materials.

Helen Gaynor: So, this is an example of the InsureKidsNow.gov homepage. As I mentioned, we will be taking a deeper dive into the website itself, but just wanted to share what the homepage looks like and where you can click to find some of the resources that we've talked about today. So, you have the outreach tool library circled on the left. That's where you can search resources by type, so poster, social media messages, the type of content you're looking for. And then if you click on our initiatives tab, you can search by specific initiatives. So, you can visit our back-to-school page for back-to-school focused resources, or our oral health page for oral health focused resources. So, they're just sort of two different ways to take a look and search for the materials that we've covered today.

Helen Gaynor: So, there are other ways to engage with the campaign and learn about new materials and initiatives. Our Campaign Notes eNewsletter is one. So, we often send out our webinar invites via the campaign eNewsletter, and we send out a handful of eNewsletters every year, sharing new materials and news from the campaign. So that's a great way to stay up to date. And then of course our webinar series, which we are hosting now, but we do a handful of webinars throughout the year on specific topics, back to school, our last one was on mental health. So, there are a series of different webinars that can be helpful to get information on new materials and ideas for outreach. So, we share information about those via Campaign Notes too. So, if you're interested in learning more about the campaign and its resources, or have any questions that come up after today's webinar, please feel free to email us at ConnectingKids@cms.hhs.gov, and you can stay up to date with all the campaigns activities also on Twitter. So, if you follow @IKNgov on Twitter and sign up for the Campaign Notes eNewsletter, you will be pretty up to date. And if you do share resources via social media on Twitter, please feel free to tag us and use the #Enroll365. So that is all in terms of our campaign overview. And next, we will hear from Diamond Gee, Management Analyst at the Division of Communication and Outreach at the Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services at CMS, who will share an in-depth overview of the InsureKidsNow.gov website and its latest updates. So, I will now pass it to Diamond.

Diamond Gee: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm so excited to be with you today to share our updates that we've made to the InsureKidsNow website, particularly the initiatives page and the outreach tool library. So, when we thought about the web design and how it impacted our customers that come to the website, particularly our outreach partners, our consumers, and all of our stakeholders, the idea was to ensure that it was more human-centered. When people come to the website, we want to make sure it is in a friendly environment, and that they can search the website without any issues. If you can see on the left, it was very much, the words and people had to read a lot, and we wanted to ensure that when they came to the site, it was user-friendly. And as you can see, the goal was to reduce the heaviness of the solid colors, and go to a more friendly graphic, a more relatable graphic so that when you came to the website, it was more easy for you to search.

Diamond Gee: Our redesign goals for our outreach tool library consisted of to decrease the amount of scrolling. Our page was very long, and we know that many people had trouble searching the website, so we felt that it was very necessary to address that issue. We wanted to create a more searchable database, as well as to be able to filter so people could find things more easily. So, if you see on the left side, as I mentioned, it's very long, and we wanted to ensure that people could just simply put in a search, what they were looking for.

We worked really hard on ensuring that all of the words were searchable so that when they put in something specific, such as Facebook or Twitter images and things of that nature, they could easily find them.

Helen Gaynor: Thanks, Diamond. And now we are going to swap from the PowerPoint and do a demonstration of the InsureKidsNow.gov website.

Diamond Gee: Absolutely. So, before I bring up the website, I really wanted you guys to get a sense of the last website, so you can really take in the effort that we made here. So, I'm going to bring up the initiatives page first. As you can see, the graphics are very relatable and they're friendly graphics. Regardless of who comes to the website, you're going to be able to find the mental health, the peace of mind, the vaccinations, the missed care, all of the things that everyone comes to the website for. Very clickable, goes to what you're looking for, and also on the left-hand side, you can go to the others. So, we wanted to make it more user-friendly. Initially people couldn't find things, and we felt that to be very concerning, so I'm very excited about the new look and feel of the page.

Diamond Gee: Outreach tool library. As I mentioned, we now have the ability to filter, which is very important. So, if you type in, let's say back-to-school, since that's what we're focusing on, and I want to see information on Facebook images, if you go down, we see all the things that talk about back-to-school, and it makes it more easy for people to search. And that is our goal, when you come to the InsureKids website, that you find it to be easily searched, and it's very user-friendly. So, we're very pleased about the efforts that we've made here to update the website, particularly the initiatives page and the outreach tool library. We hope that it's very effective. We hope that you find it easy to search, which is the main goal here. Thanks, Helen. Thanks everyone.

Helen Gaynor: Thank you so much, Diamond. We really appreciate it. And it's great to see all of the hard work that went into the outreach tool library come to life and provide an easy way for folks to find all of the tools that they are looking for. So, we really appreciate it. I am now going to check in and see if I can pass it to Stefanie to talk about the Public Health Emergency Unwinding, and then we'll follow up with Emily as our final presentation.

Stefanie Costello: Thank y'all so much. I wanted to talk with y'all a little bit today about preparing for the end of COVID19's Public Health Emergency, and what y'all need to know about Medicaid and CHIP coverage. So, I'm Stefanie Costello. I'm the Director of the Partner Relations Group in the Office of Communications here at CMS. So, I'm going to walk through our PowerPoint today, and then we'll be available for any questions that you might have.

Stefanie Costello: So, since the beginning of the Public Health Emergency (PHE) in March 2020, as a condition of receiving an enhanced federal match rate, states have not terminated coverage for most individuals who are enrolled in Medicaid. This condition applies to states receiving the enhanced match rate through the end of the month in which the PHE ends. However, after the PHE ends, states will be required to resume normal eligibility and enrollment operations, including by disenrolling in eligible individuals. Millions of beneficiaries may need to take action to retain their Medicaid and CHIP coverage, or have to transition to other coverage such as Marketplace.

Stefanie Costello: We do not know yet when the Public Health Emergency will end, but the Department of Health and Human Services has committed to giving states a 60-day notice prior to the end of the Public Health Emergency. As of right now, I think you heard earlier, the Public Health Emergency is set to end on October 13th. We do not know if it will be extended again or not. However, because of the commitment to let us know 60-days prior to the end of the Public Health Emergency, we should be hearing from the Department 60 days prior to October 13th. So although the date is unknown, HHS and CMS want to make sure that our partners are educated and prepared for this Unwinding in the Medicaid and CHIP program once the Public Health Emergency. We're dedicated to making sure that people stay connected to coverage, whether it's remaining on Medicaid or CHIP, or if they're eligible to transition to Marketplace.

Stefanie Costello: Since many people enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP have not had to complete a full renewal process in over two years, or perhaps they've never had to complete one, we want to make sure that people enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP are aware that this is coming and we want to make sure that state agencies have an updated contact information so that individuals can be reached when the state begins the redetermination process.

Stefanie Costello: Right here, you can see that because of everything that has happened with the COVID-19, Medicaid and CHIP enrollment is at an all-time high. It has been a lifeline for health coverage for millions of people during the pandemic, and due in part to legislation that incentivized continuity of coverage and flexibilities that states adopted, enrollment in both programs again, is at an all-time high. That is an increase of over 17 million people or 24% since the beginning of the pandemic.

Stefanie Costello: So much of the increase is due to the federal COVID-related legislation. In March of 2020, Congress passed a bill, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, or FFCRA, that established the continuous enrollment condition. States received extra funding for Medicaid in exchange for keeping most Medicaid individuals enrolled through the end of the COVID PHE, which we are still in. This continuing enrollment condition doesn't apply to CHIP, but many states implemented policy changes that also resulted in continued coverage for many individuals in CHIP. Every state and territory adopted these changes in Medicaid. And along with temporary changes to CHIP policies, state actions have prevented beneficiaries from losing coverage during the PHE. It has also affected states' normal operations because they have not completed many renewals and redeterminations, or terminated coverage for individuals enrolled in Medicaid.

Stefanie Costello: So, what happens when the Public Health Emergency ends? When the PHE ends, the continuous enrollment condition will also end. States will need to return to normal operations, including renewals and terminations of coverage for ineligible individuals, and this process, we refer to it as Unwinding. States will have 12 to 14 months to complete the work needed to return to normal operations and complete renewals for all individuals enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP, and the basic health program.

Stefanie Costello: Our work together, and the engagement of partners, community organizations, and advocates is critical in this process, in part because the volume of work, including renewals and redeterminations of eligibility will be substantial in all states, especially given this increase in enrollment. This will be challenging for states in the workforce and other burdens may increase the risk that people lose coverage. It's estimated that roughly 15 million people could lose their eligibility for Medicaid or CHIP coverage. However, it's essential to note that these data do not mean that 15 million people will become uninsured. Many will get eligible through other health and health coverage, including the Marketplace, and will need to transition to those coverage, and some will obtain coverage through their jobs. We at HHS and CMS are focused on ensuring that eligible individuals remain enrolled and that those no longer eligible for Medicaid and CHIP smoothly transition to other coverage.

Stefanie Costello: So, what will the Unwinding process look like in states? As previously noted, states will need to complete eligibility renewals for everyone enrolled in Medicaid, CHIP, or a basic health program after the PHE ends. States will have 12 months to initiate renewals for this full population. This is typical, Medicaid and CHIP enrollees normally have their eligibility renewed at least once a year. However, while many states have continued to do renewals during the PHE, states have generally been unable to terminate enrollment for people they have found to be otherwise ineligible based on increases in income or other changes.

Stefanie Costello: States have been actively preparing for the resumption of the normal operations, but they're likely to face some challenges. First is volume. With the increased enrollment, states will have more beneficiaries to renew, and this is likely to test the state's systems capacity in the workforce. Like many other industries, Medicaid and CHIP agencies have lost staff during the pandemic and are working to hire and train new workers. The length of time since some agencies have been in contact with beneficiaries, it's been a long time since some people have gone through the renewal process, and states may have outdated mailing

addresses and other contact information, which will be critical to ensure that eligible individuals receive renewal information from their states when they retain coverage.

Stefanie Costello: State Medicaid and CHIP agencies have been actively preparing for the changes and challenges ahead, and many have been working for many months to ensure that eligible individuals remain enrolled and to support those who will need to transition. For example, CMS has encouraged states to take several steps, all of which must have including to: develop an Unwinding plan to prioritize and distribute renewals when the PHE ends; obtain updated contact information, including addresses, emails, and phone numbers, to ensure that individuals receive information on renewals; launch a robust outreach and communication plan to reach consumers and stakeholders; and engage community partners, health plans in the provider community to encourage individuals to update their contact information and to provide assistance with renewals.

Stefanie Costello: Most states plan to spread renewals over 12 months after the PHE ends. A few states plan to take less time, maybe three to six months. But CMS continues to work with them to minimize the potential coverage loss from the increased workload in shorter timeframes that this will bring. Almost all states have continued to renew eligibility for some enrollees during the PHE. States that have not or are actively planning to restart full renewals and subsequently terminations of ineligible enrollees. Most states are implementing strategies to collect and verify updated enrollee contact information, and at least half are working with health plans. States have begun to launch outreach and social media campaigns to raise awareness about Unwinding, and some states have also started to post their plans publicly.

Stefanie Costello: We at HHS have also been focused on providing the tools and resources needed to ensure a successful Unwinding period. We've adopted an all of government approach, working closely with states, stakeholders like you, and government partners to support the work ahead. If you haven't seen it yet, I would encourage you to check out our Unwinding specific landing page at [Medicaid.gov/Unwinding](https://www.Medicaid.gov/Unwinding). There, we will have resources, tools, and guidance to support both states and stakeholders. For example, you can find policy guidance, planning tools, and even a robust communications toolkit in English and Spanish for you to customize and use to share key messages with consumers, like updating your contact information and checking your mail.

Stefanie Costello: In May, CMS also launched a consumer facing page, [Medicaid.gov/Renewals](https://www.Medicaid.gov/Renewals). For individuals and Medicaid and CHIP to learn about Unwinding, to get connected to their state agency and find help. Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries, providers and community partners can visit this page, select their state, and be directed to the state resource. This page will be updated as we learn more for when the PHE will end. So, for example, if you don't know where to go to for your state to find out information specific to your state about the Unwinding, you can go to this webpage, scroll down until you find your state. You can select it, and you'll find your state's contact information.

Stefanie Costello: We're dedicated to making sure that people stay connected to coverage, whether that's remaining on Medicaid or CHIP if they're still eligible, or transitioning to another cover adoption like Marketplace. Through a multi-pronged whole of government communications approach, we're working to create a national outreach campaign that builds on the states' efforts and engages deeply with partners and stakeholders. There are two phases of our current outreach approach. We're currently in phase one, which focuses on awareness so that people with Medicaid and those who support them know that the eligibility renewal is coming sometime in the future, and that they need to pay attention and ensure that their contact information is up to date, to watch their mail and to take action if necessary. Outreach will refresh once the 60-day notice is communicated, announcing the end of the Public Health Emergency. Phase two will come once the Public Health Emergency ends and eligibility renewals restart. During phase two, we will shift into making sure that people who are transitioning from Medicaid or CHIP to the Marketplace are able to find coverage that meets their needs.

Stefanie Costello: As mentioned, our communication strategy centers around making sure that individuals either maintain enrollment through Medicaid and CHIP, or that they're enrolled in the best type of health insurance coverage that they're eligible for at the time of their redetermination. For people who are transitioning to another form of coverage, for example, Marketplace, we want to make sure they understand what is happening and that we're available to help them with that transition. We're taking a whole of government approach again on Unwinding, and we're creating materials that have consistent messaging, that can be utilized across many different levels. We're also building our communications campaign and outreach effort in a way that they are layered on top of what the states have already planned. Since each state will have its own communications plans and tactics for reaching out to Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries, we want to support those efforts with a set of resources that can be used by both states and other stakeholders as they communicate with beneficiaries. There are two phases to our current approach. Again, outlined here is phase one and phase two.

Stefanie Costello: Phase one, I want to restate because we're in it, is to make sure that folks are updating their contact information with their state Medicaid and CHIP agency. We also want to make sure that they need to contact their state agency if they move or if they need to make sure their address is correct. And second, we want to make sure that they know that this renewal process is taking place sometime in the future, and it will impact their coverage. And with that, we want them to pay attention to any updates they receive from their states.

Stefanie Costello: CMS has created a series of resources to help partners become more informed about Medicaid Unwinding and to help support partners as they prepare and reach out to their audiences. On [Medicaid.gov/Unwinding](https://www.Medicaid.gov/Unwinding), you can find our Unwinding Communications Toolkit and graphics. This toolkit provides some additional context on Unwinding that we hope will be helpful to you and your colleagues, as y'all are new to the topic of Unwinding, or if you're working with people that need basic understanding of Unwinding. There's also some key messages derived from consumer research that we think will resonate well and are most understandable to help consumers take action. These messages are woven into a variety of resources in the toolkit to help meet people where they are with options that will allow our partners to integrate them into their usual lines of communication and audiences.

Stefanie Costello: So right now, the toolkit is available in English and Spanish, and we are considering other languages. I want to highlight, our Unwinding Communications Toolkit was released in March 2022, and it's a living document that we will continue to add to over time. It can be used by your organization at any point, starting now, to help spread the word and provide information about Unwinding for phase one. In addition to the same materials of messaging, we've also added some context that will be helpful to you. We want to make sure that you understand what's inside the toolkit, such as drop-in articles, text messages, key messages, social media, email samples, and call center scripts. Again, all of these will be really helpful and can be taken from y'all and tailored to best meet your audience. These messages again, are woven with a variety of resources in the toolkit that allow you to integrate into your own audience in lines of communications. There are fillable flyers where partners like yourselves can fill in individual state and local resources. And then again, we've included the drop-in article, social media, text message, email content, and call center scripts that you can use in any way that you choose. I do want to reiterate that this is available in English and in Spanish, and we are considering some additional languages.

Stefanie Costello: These are examples of our social media tools, and graphics, and drop-in articles, and text message just so you can get a little bit of a flavor. We're also going to be cross-posting the materials in the Back-to-School Toolkit, which was talked about earlier today in those graphics. So, when you go to this Unwinding Toolkit, you'll be able to see this toolkit and you will also be able to see the Back-to-School Toolkit. And we also have a few flyers that can be used for providers and provider offices.

Stefanie Costello: So, what can you do right now? You should begin thinking about what your organization can do in the coming weeks and months to really help spread the word about this first phase. We encourage you to think about how your organization may be helpful and how you may be able to connect with other

organizations in your state or region or community to help reach people with Medicaid and CHIP coverage. We also encourage you to use the toolkit resources we discussed and begin incorporating information about Unwinding into your materials, presentations, and work plans. Lastly, we encourage you to attend our HHS and CMS monthly Medicaid and CHIP continuous enrollment webinar series. It's on the fourth Wednesday of every month, which just so happens to be tomorrow. It's also on back-to-school, so while some of the information that you heard today might be repeated tomorrow, we're also going to go into depth on some best practices and how we can better target and use the time period of back-to school to help inform Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries.

Stefanie Costello: Again, our key messages that we have are around phase I, which is updating your contact information, checking your mail, and completing any renewal information if you get one. Right now, there are four things you and your organization can do in the weeks and months ahead. You could first commit to making Unwinding a work priority for your organization, as well as any coalitions that you might be a part of. And we want to think about how your organization might be helpful to this work, including thinking about what your strengths are.

Stefanie Costello: Second, we want to connect you... Excuse me. Second, we'd like for you to connect with other organizations in your state and region who work with Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries and think about how y'all can work together to help them, especially if they don't consider themselves Medicaid experts.

Stefanie Costello: Third, we want to have y'all attend our Medicaid and CHIP webinar series this month and all subsequent months. I will note that in August, we're going to be talking about Marketplace and how folks transitioning to the Marketplace will work within once the Public Health Emergency ends.

Stefanie Costello: Fourth, we want to incorporate information about Unwinding into your existing materials, presentations, and work plans. We appreciate your partnership in helping to make sure that people remain connected in health coverage, and we are here to support you in any way that we need throughout the Unwinding process.

Helen Gaynor: Thank you so much, Stefanie. We really appreciate it, and the overview of the toolkit is super helpful, and is going to be really important over the next couple of months and weeks. So, thank you. I'd now like to pass it to Emily if you are on, Emily. Emily is the Health Insurance Program Director at the Virginia Health Care Foundation and is going to share about utilizing some resources for outreach in her work. So, Emily, over to you.

Emily Roller: Great. Thank you so much, Helen. Wonderful. A little bit about us. I thought it might be helpful to provide just a little bit of context about who we are at VHCF. We are a public-private partnership and we're celebrating our 30th year of living out our mission, which is to increase access to primary healthcare services among uninsured and/or medically underserved Virginians. And one of the key ways that we've put that mission into action over about 20 of those 30 years is via two initiatives that aim to increase health insurance coverage through Medicaid and CHIP, which in Virginia we call FAMIS, among eligible Virginians.

Emily Roller: And so, we have a grant-funded program called Project Connect that provides community outreach and one-to-one application and enrollment assistance throughout Virginia, part of which is now funded by a new HEALTHY KIDS cooperative agreement with CMS, and so we're delighted to be launching into that with you all. And then we also have a training program that's called SignUpNow that helps community helper organizations like federally qualified health centers, Head Starts, home-visiting programs, and schools to understand Virginia's Medicaid and CHIP eligibility roles.

Emily Roller: Right now, VHCF has about 22 full-time equivalent application assisters in the pockets of Virginia that are illustrated here in blue. And for many of them, schools are historically a key partner in their outreach, and so back-to-school, as you can imagine, is a cornerstone of their outreach, as well. Yeah, there we go. So, for context, if you're not familiar with Virginia geography, we have three major urban centers and

those are here in orange. We have application assisters located in all of those places. And then we have two major rural areas that I've outlined here in purple. We affectionately call those Southwest, in the Southwest, and then Southside, which is down along the border with North Carolina.

Emily Roller: As a Connecting Kids to Coverage cooperative agreement recipient, VHCF places subgrants for application assistance where it's most needed, and so our grantees are situated in places where lots of Virginians are income-eligible for, but not yet enrolled in, our Medicaid and CHIP programs. I think it's worth noting that the Connecting Kids to Coverage materials have been really, really helpful in both our urban areas and our rural areas.

Emily Roller: So how have our application assisters actually used these materials? Well, with the return of in-person events, our network of application assisters are once again using materials, like the one that you see here, the palm card, to connect with families at community events in preparation for back-to-school. We love that these are available in print in the top five non-English spoken languages in Virginia. So, for us it's Spanish, Arabic, Amharic, Urdu, and Vietnamese. We also love that they're representative. They feature racially diverse children and parents, and that helps to ensure that our application assisters are equipped with materials that families can recognize themselves in. So, I've included a couple of images of our application assisters here using these materials.

Emily Roller: We also love that they're customizable. So as application assisters, we love to promote our ability to help families apply for and enroll in coverage at the same time that we promote the Medicaid and CHIP programs. Being able to add, for example, an assister's name, and organization, and phone number really helps us to do that. And also, Virginia calls its separate CHIP program FAMIS. We have a special name for that. As you can see here, we've got a special logo for that too. I like that palm cards like this one promote what we're bringing to the table as health insurance, because for us in Virginia, the CHIP name can sometimes be a little bit confusing since we call our program FAMIS. That's been really helpful to us.

Emily Roller: Another of the materials that our assisters have used, historically, are these renewal reminders. We find them really, really helpful. Of course, right now, manual renewals are on hold in Virginia, just like they are in many other states due to the Public Health Emergency, but of course, once that ends, many folks are, as has just been mentioned by Stefanie, going to be out of the habit of renewing annually. And in particular for us in Virginia, since our Medicaid expansion just began in 2019, we are one of those states where a large share of our enrollees, including probably a lot of our enrolled parents, may not even realize that renewal is typically a component of remaining enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP. We really like that these renewal reminders right now also include messaging about keeping contact information up to date with a state's Medicaid agency in preparation for the Unwinding. And then one other thing that we've done with these, or that our assisters have done with these, that I think is pretty cool, is that you can actually print them as refrigerator magnets. And so, a family can place them on the refrigerator to have that renewal date top of mind when the time comes to begin renewing again. And also, in a pinch, these can also be used as enrollment appointment reminder cards. A little bit bigger than a business card, a little less likely to get lost. For instance, one of our application assistance teams does free school physical events each year, and they like to set appointments with families to come back for their enrollment appointment after that free school physical takes place. They've used these periodically as a reminder for that appointment, as well.

Emily Roller: And our digital materials. So last year in particular for us in Virginia, because of some changing guidelines for Virginia school children for vaccine requirements, our assisters really emphasized vaccination alongside Medicaid and CHIP during the back-to-school period. And this year, I think promoting the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine for that youngest age group, as Dr. Peacock shared with us in reminding families that the vaccine is covered by Medicaid and CHIP, has already brought some successful opportunities to engage families to promote Medicaid and CHIP in tandem with vaccination.

Emily Roller: And one thing that we found really helpful was actually to encourage local schools and/ or school districts to share our posts when we posted the campaign materials, including our application assisters'

contact information. And if you can convince them to do that, you can even include a link to an online intake form that families can complete directly from that post, if you can link to it in the post, if you've got one of those. One of our assisters uses this kind of like a digital commit card so that families can sign up for an appointment with her after clicking on a Facebook link.

Emily Roller: And finally, and this is one of my favorites, one of our longstanding application assisters. Her name is Ann, but she's known in her rural community as The FAMIS Lady in honor of Virginia's FAMIS program and the fact that she's been helping families to enroll for so many years now. She's used the InsureKidsNow.gov images as part of a passive rotating display at back-to-school nights, at sports registration nights, PTA meetings, and everything in between. She just puts together a PowerPoint and sets it to automatically advance every 5 or 10 seconds so that it can cycle through while she is answering questions or sharing updates. And that enables her to work the room at a big event while simultaneously continuing to share her message about the importance of health insurance coverage through Medicaid and CHIP and her availability to provide application assistance. And I believe that is all for me.

Helen Gaynor: Thank you so much, Emily. It's really great to see how everything works in the community, so we really appreciate your overview of the CKC resources and how you've used them.

Helen Gaynor: Now, I would like to thank all of our panelists for sharing their time and expertise with us during today's webinar and open it up for questions. If they're general, anybody is able to answer, and I'll let you know if there's one directed at a specific panelist. But the first question we have is a bit general, is there a tie between Connecting Kids to Coverage and the termination of the PHE?

Helen Gaynor: So, I can answer the first part of this in just saying that during our back-to-school initiative, we will be encouraging families to update their contact information through our back-to-school outreach so that they can prepare to receive any important reminders regarding renewal when it does come time to Unwind, and they'll have to be on the lookout for renewal information. So, we are going to have some messaging surrounding updating contact information. There's some graphics about renewal and such in our Back-to-School Toolkit that are available. And then, of course, the toolkit that Stefanie walked through as well. But Stefanie, or Amy, or anybody, I don't know if you want to add anything else in terms of a tie between CKC and the termination of the PHE.

Stefanie Costello: Yeah, I mean, I think the goal of Connecting Kids to Coverage is to make sure that kids have health coverage, and we know that a good number of children are going to end up losing coverage when the Public Health Emergency ends, through no fault of their own, especially if their parents don't have updated contact information on file with their state agency. And so, it's really important that all families update their current addresses with the state, and then if they move that they update those as well.

Stefanie Costello: So whenever a renewal letter comes in, when the renewal notice comes at the end of the Public Health Emergency, they will be able to update their income. And then if they're eligible, be able to retain the Medicaid or CHIP coverage. And if they're not, then they'll be given the resources and directions to be able to access other coverage like Marketplace. So that's why we wanted to use back-to-school as a way for parents who are paying attention to other things like applying for free and reduced school lunch or getting school physicals to also make sure that they're updating their information with their state agencies, as well.

Helen Gaynor: Thank you. All right. The next question, will there be a PowerPoint template available for presentations? So, we can definitely provide something in terms of a template for presentations if you want to share about the resources or any of the customized outreach materials. So that is something we'd be happy to follow up on via email.

Helen Gaynor: Are there any activity sheets or coloring sheets for children as part of the campaign? So, no, but the Connecting Kids to Coverage campaign, our audience is primarily partner organizations and providing resources for outreach to families and parents and adults. But if this is something that would be helpful for

outreach in any type of way, it could potentially be something to consider. But we don't have anything in terms of coloring sheets or activity sheets right now. That's a great question.

Helen Gaynor: Okay. Here's one about vaccines. Although our goal is to identify and assist families enrolling in healthcare coverage, we do find children who may not qualify. So, regarding cost for vaccines, do the resources shared also provide information and options for those without coverage? In our outreach about vaccines, we typically direct to [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to connect families with what their options are for locating vaccines in their area, but we'd be happy to follow up and pull some additional information if we can and share via email to see if we can assist there.

Helen Gaynor: And then there's an additional question that I believe we'll follow up on via email, as well, about being interested in learning more about the National Campaign and if it addresses any issues with access to authorized home care services, specifically through licensed home healthcare agency. So, I think we want to learn a little bit more about the question and are happy to follow up over email, so we will reach out directly.

Helen Gaynor: So, I think if there are no additional questions, we can go ahead and wrap things up. I just want to thank the panelists again for their time and expertise today. We really enjoyed being able to go through all of the information on vaccines and the Unwinding Toolkit and seeing the updated [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://www.insurekidsnow.gov) site, and then learning about how these resources can be utilized in the community. So, we're really appreciative to the panelists. We thank you all for joining us today and listening, and if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us. We'll be posting the deck on [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://www.insurekidsnow.gov) in the next couple of weeks, and we'll be following up with questions where we wanted to share a bit more information. We'll follow up via email. If any questions come up after the fact, please feel free to reach out to us, and we really appreciate your time today. So, thank you very much.
