



January 19, 2012 - Topic: Medi-Cal

## Enrollment in Medicaid, CHIP Remained Stable in 2011, Report Finds

The number of U.S. residents who had health insurance through Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program remained stable in 2011, despite a struggling economy that created budget strains for states and forced more individuals into poverty, **according to a report** from the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured and the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, *National Journal* reports.

The report -- which surveyed people in 50 states -- found the federal health reform law's requirement that states maintain eligibility levels until a nationwide Medicaid expansion takes place in 2014 "was central in preserving coverage during 2011."

According to the report, 11 states took steps to expand coverage; eight of those states focused on extending coverage to low-income, uninsured children.

However, some states still are adopting strategies to reduce public health insurance costs, the report found. For example, physician reimbursements are being pared back. The report also found that 14 states intend to raise or impose copayments in 2012 (Quinton, *National Journal*, 1/18).

Meanwhile, just two states last year used their existing authority to reduce Medicaid enrollment, according to the report. Arizona halted new enrollments for its waiver program for childless adults, while Nevada discontinued some coverage options for parents and pregnant women after its waiver expired (Daly, *Modern Healthcare*, 1/18).