
National Covering Kids & Families Network Scoop

May 6, 2011

A few items of interest to ring in the new month of May in this week's Scoop including a reminder about our upcoming webinar, a simplification note from Colorado and lastly, an upcoming webinar from NASHP about collaborating with state agencies to implement health reform and improve your health care systems.

[NCKF Webinar May 17: Register Now](#)

The next National Covering Kids & Families Network webinar is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 17 from 3-4:30 PM Eastern**. During the webinar, we will learn more about the national picture and which states have adopted various simplification strategies, some of the successes and some of the lessons learned. We will also be joined by colleagues from Alabama and Iowa who will speak to specific strategies they have employed in their states. Notably, both states have been rewarded for their successes in this area by having received CHIPRA Medicaid performance bonus dollars, with Alabama receiving over \$54 million in one year alone. To register for the webinar, please go [here](#).

[Colorado Eliminates the "Stair Step" for Children's Medicaid](#)

Colorado recently passed legislation to further simplify children's health programs by eliminating the "stair step" for children's Medicaid. Right now in Colorado (and in 21 other states), a family can have kids on two different public health insurance programs causing confusion, inefficiency and unnecessary costs. A good example of this is a family with two kids ages four and seven, with an annual income of \$28,000. Because Medicaid covers children aged 0-6 up to 133% and children aged 7-18 only up to 100% (the rest being covered by CHIP), the family would have one child eligible for Medicaid, the four year old, and one child eligible for Child Health Plan Plus (Colorado's CHIP program), the seven year old. Since Colorado manages its Medicaid and CHIP programs separately, these children have different health plans, different benefits, two different enrollment cycles and potentially two different health care providers. This is inefficient and more importantly, confusing for families. By aligning Medicaid eligibility for all children up to 133% of the FPL, Colorado is getting a jump on health reform, simplifying its program to make it more efficient, saving dollars and making things work better for families. Be sure to check out a blog from Gretchen Hammer from the All Kids Covered Coalition in Colorado about this exciting improvement [here](#).

[NASHP Webinar on Building Partnerships](#)

The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) and Community Catalyst have been working to support state officials and the advocacy community in 11 southern states engaged in the Southern Health Partners Initiative as they seek to implement health care reform in their states. Please join them for a webinar on May 11 from 3:00-4:00 PM Eastern where they will discuss strategies to enhance states' ability to work together effectively with consumer advocates in promoting systems improvements. A Virginia state official and a consumer advocate from Louisiana will make presentations. To learn more and to register, please go [here](#).

[Government Shutdown Avoided Partially Due to Medicaid Performance Bonus Funds](#)

A little known fact that some maybe aware of is that last month's government shutdown was avoided in part due to \$3.5 billion taken from the Medicaid performance bonus dollars that had been set aside in CHIPRA. While there is no cause for alarm since there is sufficient money left to award these bonuses in the future, it is definitely not a good practice and one we hope to not see happen again. To read more about the specifics, please see CCF Co-Executive Director Jocelyn Guyer's blog [here](#).

As always, please feel free to contact us—or your Network colleagues using the [listserv](#). Go [here](#) to see previous issues of the Scoop.

The Center for Children and Families (CCF) is an independent, nonpartisan policy center based at Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute whose mission is to expand and improve health coverage for America's children and families.

Read more at www.ccfgeorgetown.org and check out our blog at www.theccfblog.org