Policies That Support More Efficient Program Administration

No- Tech
Low- Tech
and Hi-Tech

LOUISIANA
Department of HEALTH and HOSPITALS

CBPP PUBLIC BENEFIT MODERNIZATION CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 23, 2008

J. RUTH KENNEDY, LA. DEPT OF HEALTH & HOSPITALS

"A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats" —John F. Kennedy

LaCHIP
Louisiana Children's Health Insurance Program

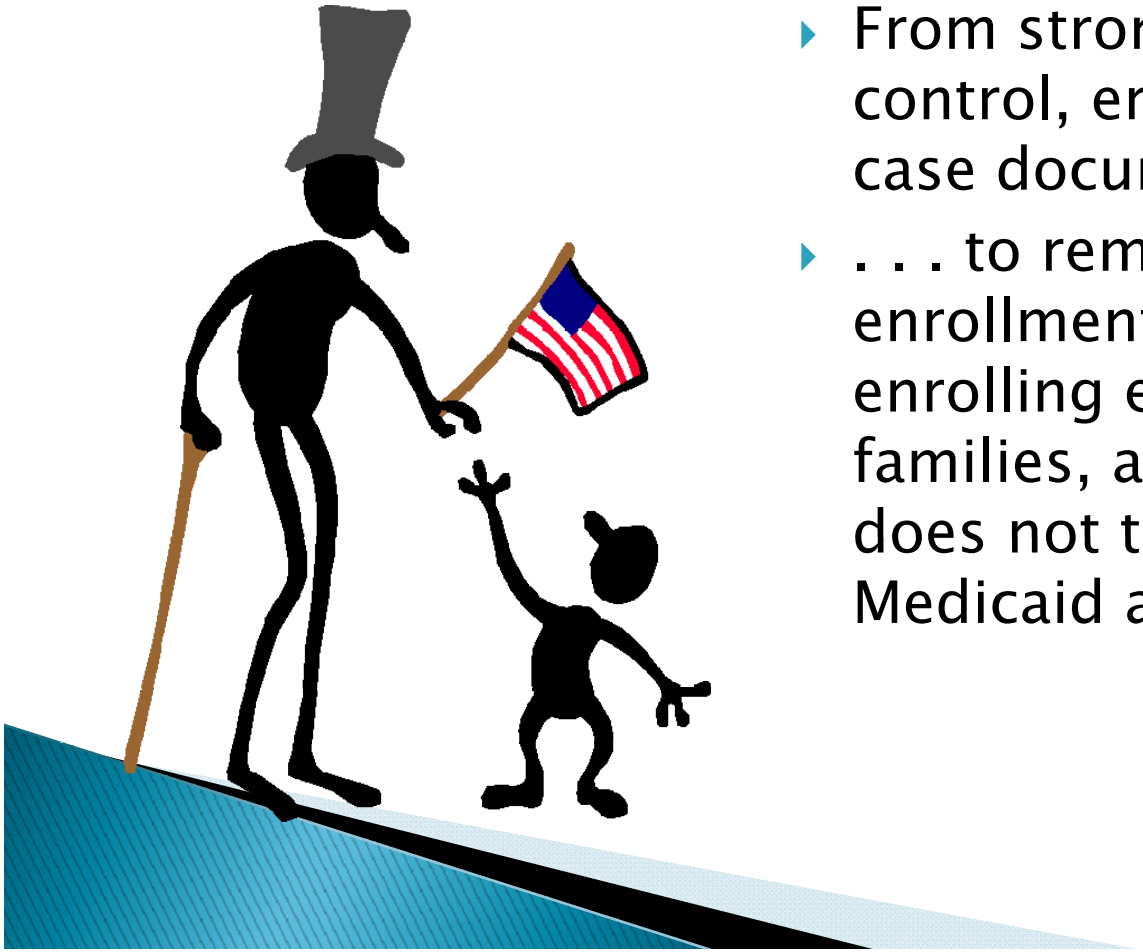
Improvements to SCHIP Renewal Process & Retention

Improvements to Medicaid Renewal Process & Retention

Overview of SCHIP & Medicaid Eligibility Modernization

- No Tech
  - How we've manage to achieve agency change
  - U.S. postal service
- Low Tech
  - *Ex parte* renewals
  - Alexander Graham Bell's (still) marvelous invention
- High Tech
  - Paperless eligibility records
  - Remote connectivity to all eligibility systems
  - Automated voice response and voice recognition software
  - Web-based self service

We Recognized the Need for a Change in Focus



- From strong emphasis on quality control, error reduction, thorough case documentation . . .
- . . . to removing barriers, making enrollment process “user friendly”, enrolling eligible children and families, assuring loss of cash does not translate to loss of Medicaid as well.

How Good is Good Enough????

- Defined degree of risk we could accept
- Caseworkers empowered to use judgment
- " Reasonable certainty" rather than absolute certainty
- Net cost of simplified renewal for all vs cost of ineligible benefits for a few

First Step: "They've Moved the Cheese!" Training for Supervisors in May 2000

- *They have moved the cheese*
- *The quicker you let go of old cheese, the sooner you can enjoy new cheese*
- *They keep moving the cheese so be ready to change quickly!*

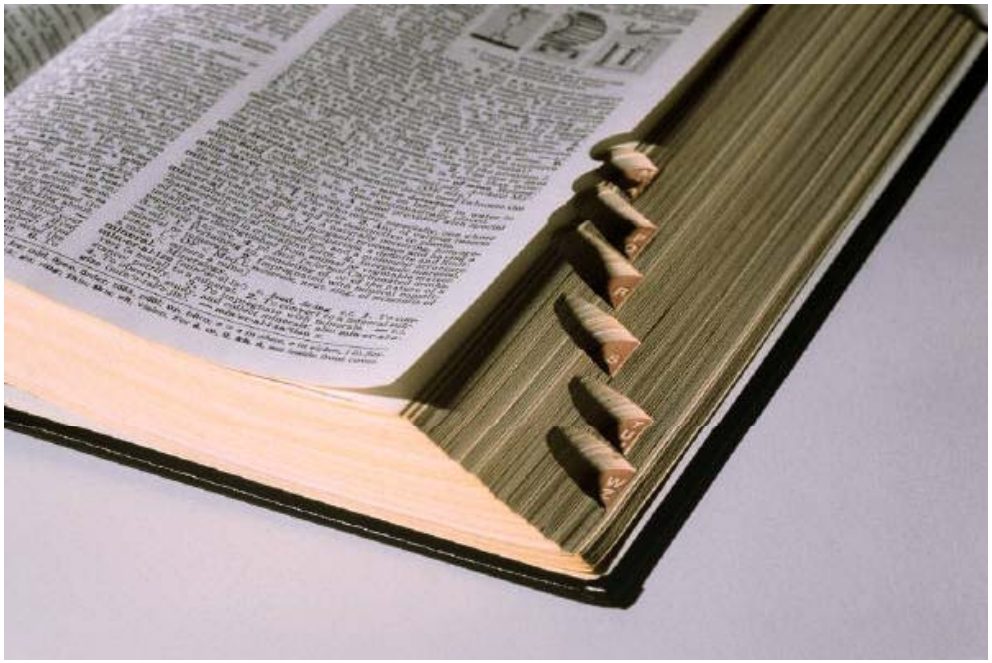
Internal Marketing Messages to Eligibility Staff

- Why health coverage for kids is important
  - to child
  - to family
  - to State
  - to society
- Barriers to getting and staying enrolled
  - Misinformation/lack of knowledge
  - Literacy
- Parental apathy is not the child's fault

Aggressive Follow-up When Renewal Form in Not Received

- Incorporated into policy and procedures since July 2001
- Efforts to find new address and locate family
  - Other computer systems
  - Internet
  - Schools, medical providers
- Phone calls must be attempted and documented
- First line supervisors make (& document) attempts as well
- Major enrollment losses when discontinued from 7/06 to 11/06 with citizenship workload

Ex Parte Renewal Defined



- "Action by one party without the involvement of the other"
- Heavy reliance on other computer systems for verification
  - Food Stamps
  - Child Support
  - Labor Tax Records
  - "The Work Number"

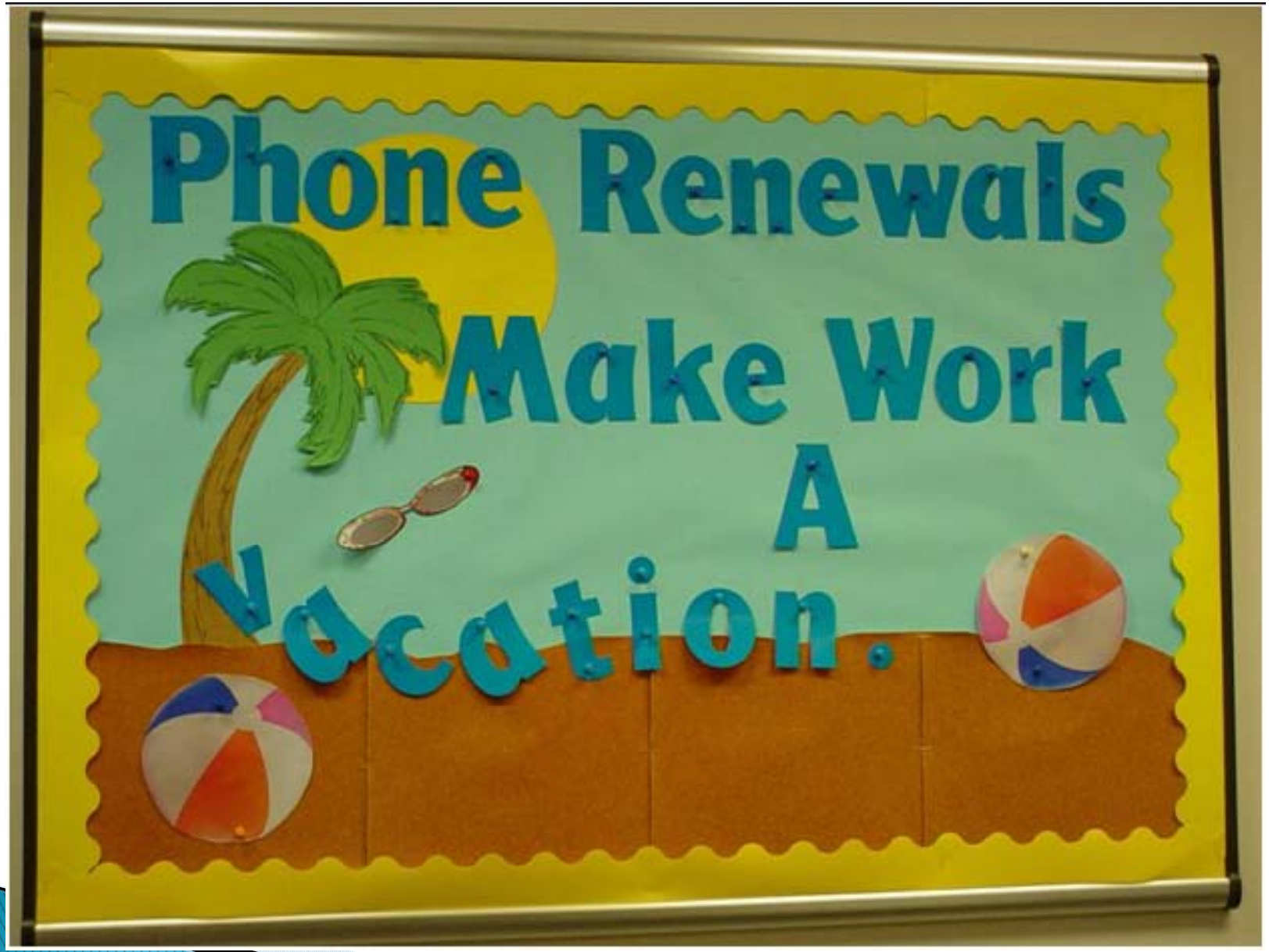
"*Ex Parte*"–Now Not So New Eligibility Vocabulary Word

- It's an adjective!
  - *CMS has advised that we should do ex parte renewals.*
- It's a verb!
  - *Is there any way you can possibly ex parte it?*
- It's a noun!
  - *I did 8 ex partes yesterday.*

Handing Off Paper For Telephone
TELEPHONE RENEWALS
PAPER RENEWALS
Farewell

Telephone Renewals Benefit Families and the Agency

- Federal Medicaid regs require annual review—not signed form
- Has evolved from "cold calls" and follow-up to "time to renew/call me" letters
- Key to getting procedural closures below 1 %
- Major reduction in administrative cost—postage, paper, staff time
- Families love it!


Phone Renewals
Make Work
A
Vacation.

Automated Voice Response Renewals

- Families can renew anytime—off-cycle or "rolling" renewals encouraged
- Option available when calling the toll free LaCHIP & Medicaid hotline
- Renewal letters include information on this 24/7 option
- "*To renew by phone now, Press 3*"
- Voice recognition software integrated in 7/08

STEERING OUR WAY
TO AUTOMATED
1-877-252-2447
HAPPY
TRAILS!
RENEWALS

Administrative Renewals for Select Cases Since 7/07

- Medicare Savings Programs
- Long Term Care
- Relationship other than parent (kin/non-kin caregivers whose income does not count)
- One parent household with stable unearned income (usually child support)
- No change in eligibility in last 3 years and net income < $500

Eligibility system data analysis indicates very low likelihood of closure due to income for cases with these characteristics

Administrative Renewals [Semantics Do Matter]

Self-Declaration

Passive Renewal

Express Lane

Local Office Involvement in Developing Retention Plans

- Participating in workgroup resulted in greater awareness of the problem (education/training)
- Front-line staff have unique insights and proposed excellent strategies
- Ownership and buy-in was achieved

Low Tech

I think one of the highlights staff enjoyed was being able to come up with a renewal plan, and then watch their ideas at work"

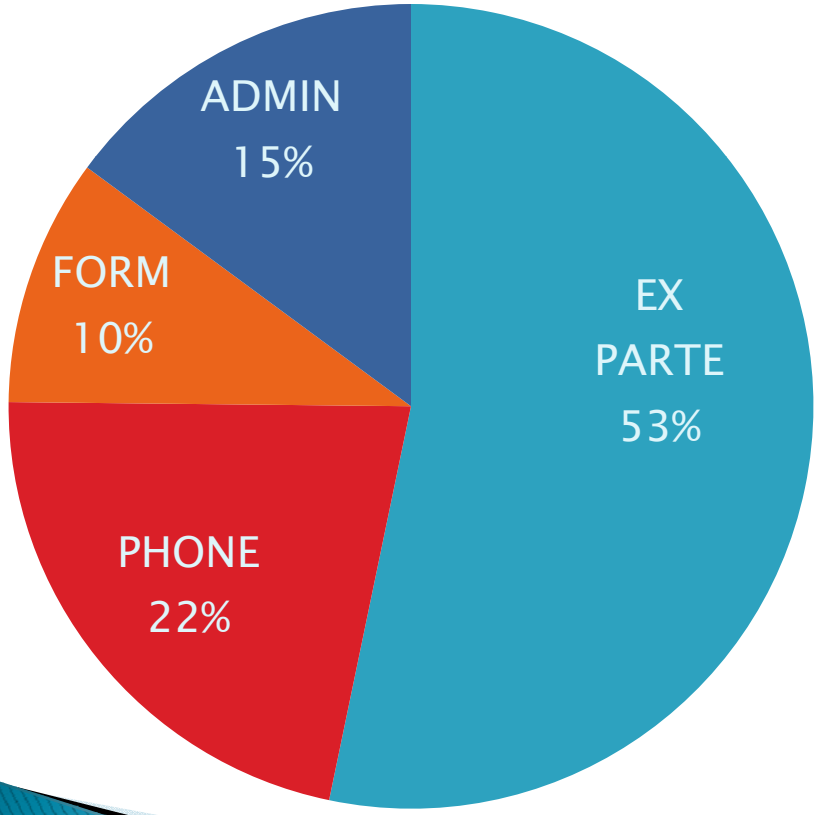
-- Debbie Falgout, Ex-Medicaid Analyst Supervisor.
Thibodaux, Louisiana

Six Ways Procedural Closures at Renewal Can be Reduced

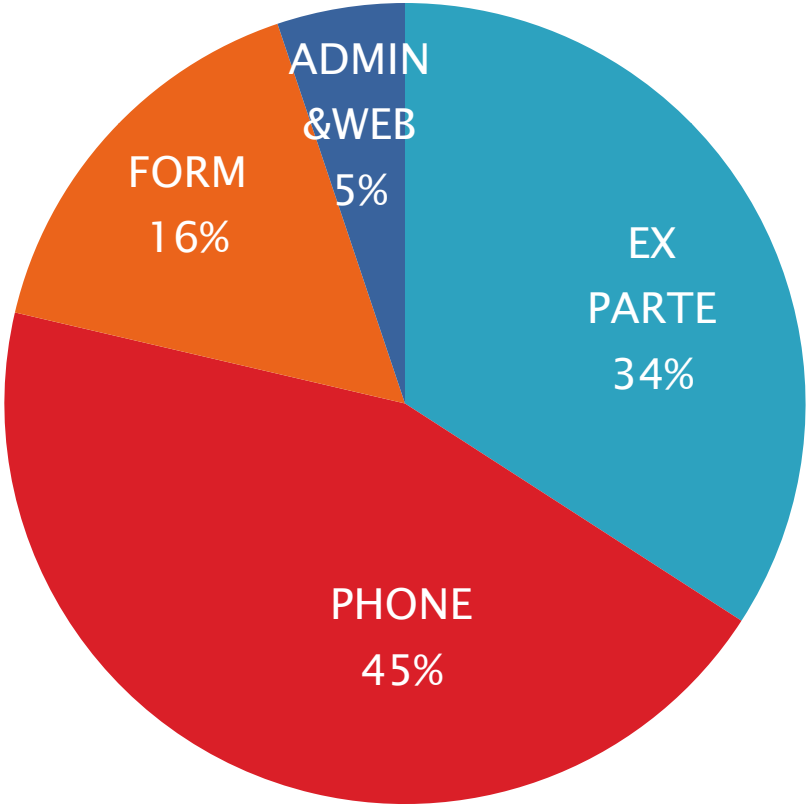
- Aggressive follow-up when renewal form is not received
- *Ex Parte* renewals when possible
- Telephone renewals
- Automated Voice Response (AVR) renewals
- Web renewals
- "Administrative" renewals

“Paths” to Renewal for Children in August 08

34,000 Medicaid



10,000 SCHIP



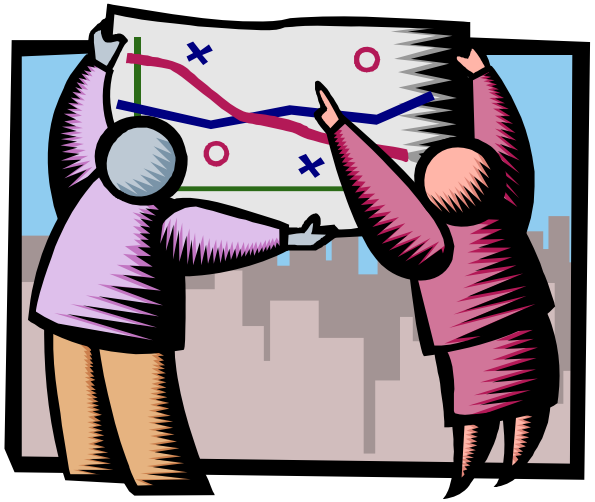
What Difference Does "Fixing" Renewals Make?

August 2008

- 10,425 SCHIP Kids—Couldn't renew 90
- 34,214 Medicaid Kids—Couldn't renew 303
- 44,639 Total Kids—Couldn't renew 393

.88%

(Less than 1%)



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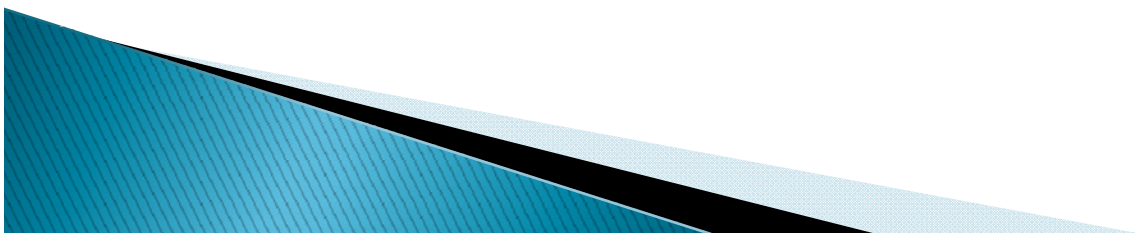
You do the math

22%

(At 2001 Rate)

Our Experience with Paperless Eligibility Case Records

- Reliability of system is essential
- Expect initial staff resistance to change
- “Double” work associated with conversion
- “High maintenance” hardware
- Electronic signature policy is important prerequisite



You Don't Have to Come to Us—We'll Come to You!

LaCHIP

LaCHIP

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LaCHIP
ENROLL TODAY!
IRE LANE
21 2:44 PM

Changing Culture is More Important Than Technology

- Winning "hearts and minds"
- Start with managers & first line supervisors
- Empowerment and encouragement of local eligibility staff
- Sense of greater purpose—providing children with access to health care
- WIIFM (What's in it for Me?)
  - Sometimes more is less
  - Administrative savings
  - "Green Government"

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, caring people can change the world Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has !

— Dr. Margaret Mead

Ruth Kennedy
LaCHIP Director & Medicaid
Deputy Director
Louisiana Department of Health & Hospitals
P.O. Box 91030
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9030
Telephone: 225 342 3032
Fax: 225 342 9508
E-Mail: rkennedy @ dhh.la.gov

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