



State Transitions of Stairstep Children



Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission

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Stairstep Children

- The Affordable Care Act expanded Medicaid eligibility to all children with income under 138 percent of the federal poverty level beginning January 2014
- Twenty-one states covering these children in separate CHIP transitioned them to Medicaid

Assessing the Stairstep Transition

- **Objective:** To identify state strategies for implementing coverage transitions, practices that facilitate the change, and challenges
- **Approach:** Interviews with Medicaid and CHIP officials, children's advocates, provider associations, and health insurance issuers in 10 states

Alabama

Colorado

Florida

Mississippi

Nevada

North Carolina

Oregon

Pennsylvania

Texas

Utah

State Strategies and Practices for Transitioning Children

- Proactively addressed continuity of care
 - Helped children enroll in a Medicaid health plan in which their PCP participated
 - Encouraged separate CHIP PCPs to participate in Medicaid
- Engaged in early and coordinated planning
 - Planning generally began six months before the transition
 - Agencies closely coordinated with each other and included technical staff

State Strategies and Practices for Transitioning Children (continued)

- Communicated early with families
 - Provided 1-3 notices beginning as early as one year before the transition
 - Targeted outreach to affected families
- Engaged a variety of stakeholders
 - Consumer advocates, health plan issuers, and provider associations
 - Transition planning, educating families and providers, and feedback to states on emerging issues

Challenges

- Information systems and technology
- Simultaneous implementation of other ACA provisions
- Educating families and providers about the transition: rationale, delivery system changes, and effects on coverage status

Next Steps

- Findings inform MACPAC's policy question:
What elements are needed in a transition plan for low- and moderate-income children who shift between coverage sources?
- Caveat: Transitions to exchanges and ESI may be less straightforward
- Study Part II: Comparison of access to care and use of selected services for stairstep children in Colorado and New York