



# Extending Postpartum Coverage

Additional Analysis on Mandatory vs.  
Optional Approaches

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Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission

Martha Heberlein

# Overview

- Recap of decisions from the October meeting
- Key considerations
- Remaining issues
- Next steps

# October Decisions

- Extend the postpartum period for 12 continuous months
- Mirror the recommendation in the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- Reiterate March 2014 recommendation requiring full Medicaid benefits for pregnancy-related eligibility pathways

# Key Considerations: Health Equity

- Significant racial and ethnic disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes exist
  - Black and Indigenous women have higher pregnancy-related death rates and risks of morbidity
  - Women of color are more likely to give birth to a preterm or low-birthweight infant
- Disparities in coverage contribute to these poor outcomes

Sources: Admon, L., T.N. Winkelman, K. Zivin, et al. 2018. Racial and ethnic disparities in the incidence of severe maternal morbidity in the United States, 2012–2015; Martin, J.A., B.E. Hamilton, M.J.K. Osterman, et al. 2019. [Births: Final data for 2018](#); and Petersen, E.E., N.L. Davis, D. Goodman, et al. 2019. [Racial/ ethnic disparities in pregnancy-related deaths: United States, 2017–2016](#).  
December 10, 2020

# Key Considerations: Coverage

- Of the 441,000 uninsured new mothers, 123,000 would become eligible for Medicaid or CHIP through a postpartum coverage extension
- Almost 37 percent of Black, 36 percent of white, and 24 percent of Hispanic uninsured new mothers would become eligible
- Uninsured new mothers who would become eligible are concentrated in several states

Sources: Johnston et al. forthcoming.

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# Key Considerations: Continuity

- Extending the postpartum coverage period would avoid disruptions during a critical clinical period
- The experience at the end of the postpartum period would differ depending on whether an individual is insured and the source of coverage

# Remaining Issues: Mandatory or Optional

- An optional extension would allow states to extend the period without a waiver but likely would not be adopted in all states
- A mandatory extension would ensure that postpartum women receive coverage for an extended period regardless of where they live
- Regardless of approach, state variation in coverage would continue

# Remaining Issues: Financing

- An extension could result in increased state spending
  - Budget constraints due to COVID-19 could make it more challenging
- The Commission may want to consider increased federal support
- There may be offsetting costs due to reductions in future spending and improved outcomes



# Next Steps

- Discuss remaining decision points
- January meeting
  - Review draft chapter
  - Vote on package of recommendations



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