

Medicaid Extension

Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies



Extending Medicaid postpartum coverage is the simplest and most targeted way to ensure that new mothers can get the care they need to help keep them and their baby healthy.

By assuring continuity of care during an extremely vulnerable time, Iowa has the opportunity to improve the health of new mothers—and set their children on a healthy trajectory.

In Iowa, Medicaid eligibility changes 60 days after a mom gives birth, and many women lose insurance coverage. States have the option of ensuring new moms can maintain their health insurance coverage for 12 months after giving birth. Iowa is one of only a handful of states that have not taken advantage of this option. Thirty-five states have implemented (or are implementing) 12-month coverage, including the midwestern states of Kansas and Indiana.

Iowa's Pro-Family Policy Opportunity

Extend Medicaid to 1 Year Postpartum

"Extension of coverage for new mothers [is] a pro-life, pro-family reform."

- Charlie Brereton,
Public Health and Human Services Director, Montana

"The relatively minimal amount to provide this care compared to the cost later – it's a no brainer in my mind."

– Sen. Kevin Blackwell,
Senate Medicaid Committee Chairman, Mississippi

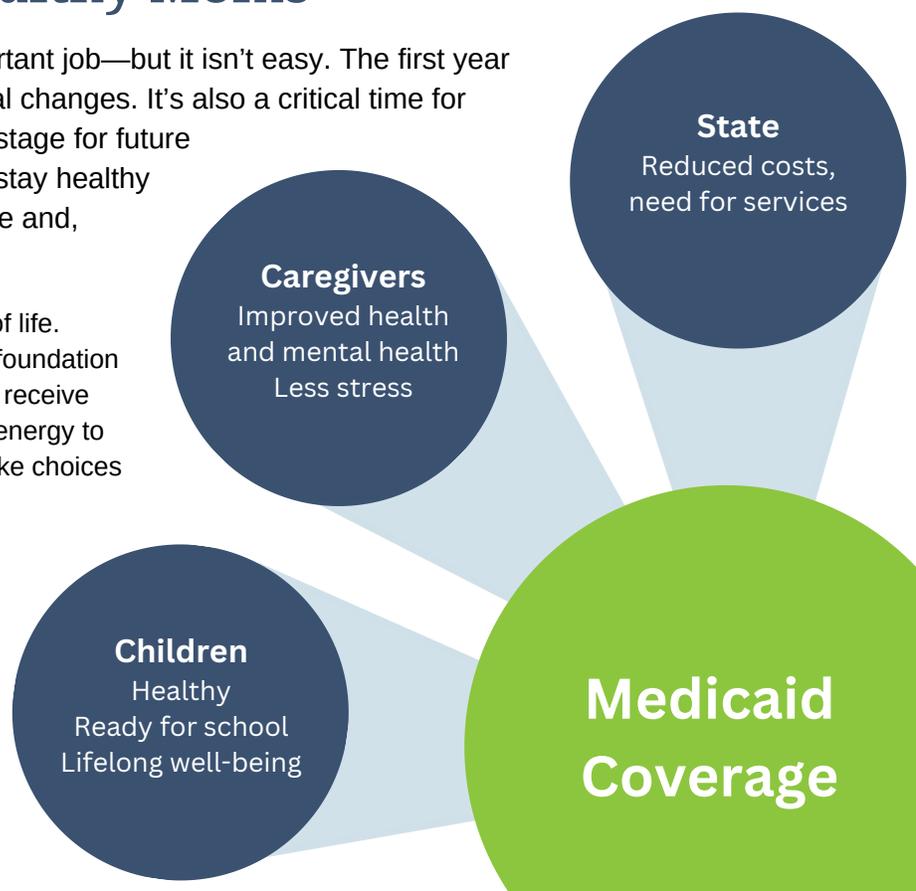


Healthy Babies Need Healthy Moms

We can all agree that caregiving is our most important job—but it isn't easy. The first year after childbirth brings many physical and emotional changes. It's also a critical time for bonding between baby and caregiver, setting the stage for future health and well-being. Moms need health care to stay healthy to provide this important foundation for a child's life and, ultimately, a thriving Iowa.

A child develops most rapidly during the first years of life. Tuned-in interactions with caregivers build a sturdy foundation for future learning and development. When mothers receive care to get and stay healthy, they can devote more energy to promoting their child's healthy development and make choices that meet their family's needs.

Maternal health directly influences children's health. The most common postpartum services include management of chronic conditions, breastfeeding support, screening for mental illness and substance use disorders, and contraception planning.



An investment in new moms today is an investment in the future of our state. These new moms are caring for and raising our future leaders.

Extending postpartum coverage can:

Improve health outcomes for mom and baby, and reduce costs:

- Some of the most dangerous pregnancy-related complications (eclampsia, cardiomyopathy, strokes, etc.) **may not surface until months after delivery**. If a new mom loses health insurance coverage shortly after giving birth, these complications are unlikely to be identified or treated.
- Postpartum depression, if left untreated, can cause moms to lose energy, feel withdrawn, and anxious, **impacting children's social-emotional development**. [1] Moms with postpartum depression are twice as likely not to take their infant to their well-child visits
- Kids are more likely to be insured and receive well-child visits if their parents are insured.

Provide access to mental health and substance use services when moms need it most.

- The year after delivery is a vulnerable period for women, particularly those with substance use disorders. Research shows that the highest overdose rate occurred **7-12 months after delivery**. [2]
- Data from when Medicaid coverage was temporarily extended during the pandemic shows that Iowa's greatest **health care utilization occurs at about 6 months postpartum** when women are accessing mental health services—including those that address postpartum depression. Losing coverage at this critical juncture can have devastating impacts for the mom and baby's health and well-being.
- **Untreated maternal mental health conditions are costly** and have multigenerational consequences. The costs come not just from health care services for mothers, but also in lost workforce productivity and increases in child developmental and behavioral disorders. [3] Moms with Medicaid coverage are 25% more likely to have symptoms of postpartum depression compared with mothers covered by private insurance.

High-Impact Solution



Allows women to have increased access to their health care provider, helping new moms get the health care they need and stay healthy.



Improves outcomes by helping to ensure that moms receive ongoing medical care to monitor and treat physical and mental health conditions.



Reduces costs on our public systems.

Many women who lose their coverage 60 days after giving birth are likely to become enrolled in Medicaid again (they may become pregnant or qualify based on their income). Due to the lapse in coverage, many re-enrolled women may be sicker and have more costly health care conditions.

Extended postpartum coverage is predicted to decrease long-term Medicaid costs through early medical interventions and coordinated care that prevent postpartum complications and worsening chronic conditions due to a delay in care.*

Sources

1. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/Maternal-Depression-Can-Undermine-Development.pdf>
2. [1] Schiff DM, Nielsen T, Terplan M, Hood M, Bernson D, Diop H, Bharel M, Wilens TE, LaRochelle M, Walley AY, Land T. Fatal and Nonfatal Overdose Among Pregnant and Postpartum Women in Massachusetts. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2018 Aug;132(2):466-474. doi: 10.1097/AOG.0000000000002734. PMID: 29995730; PMCID: PMC6060005.
3. <https://www.mathematica.org/publications/untreated-maternal-mental-health-conditions-in-texas-costs-to-society-and-to-medicaid>
4. Members of the Equitable Maternal Health Coalition. 2020. "Making the Case for Extending Medicaid Coverage Beyond 60 Days Postpartum: A Toolkit for State Advocates." The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Web site. June. <https://www.acog.org/-/media/project/acog/acogorg/files/advocacy/state-white-paper-making-the-case-for-extending-medicaid-coverage-beyond-60-dayspostpartum-a-toolkit-for-state-advocates.pdf>