

Arkansas Medicaid Update



Secretary Kristi Putnam
Arkansas Department of Human Services

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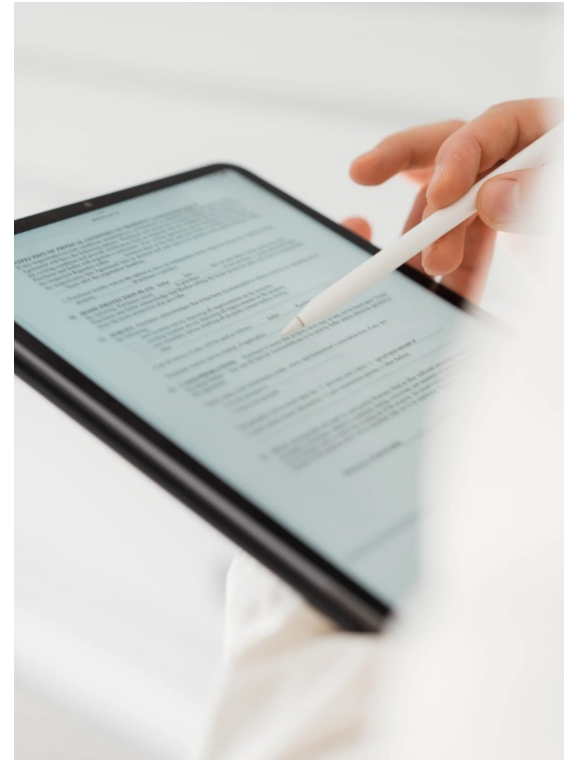
Key updates

- Medicaid Sustainability Review Process
- Unwinding the Public Health Emergency
- Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health
- Opportunities for Success
- Leadership restructuring



Medicaid Sustainability Review Process

- Initiated a comprehensive systemwide review of the entire Medicaid program
- Goals are to identify efficiencies, gaps, and potential reforms that will serve both beneficiaries and taxpayers



Unwinding the Public Health Emergency

Families First Coronavirus Response

- Passed in March 2020, this law required states to keep people who were no longer eligible on the Medicaid roles. Arkansas continued processing renewals and determining people ineligible but did not end coverage.

Omnibus Bill

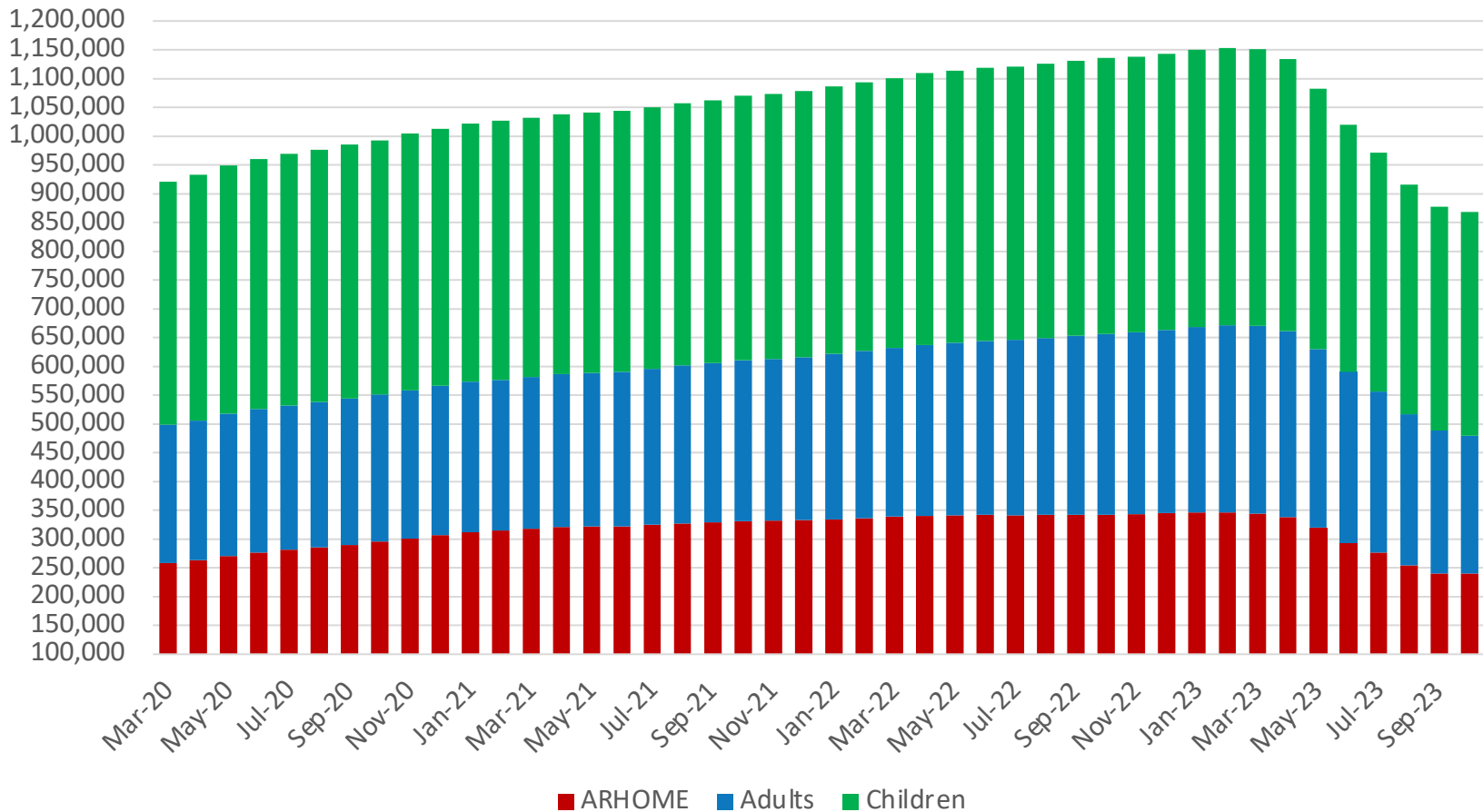
- In December 2022, President Biden signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act ending the continuous enrollment condition for Medicaid and allowing states to return to normal operations as of April 1.

Act 780 of 2021

- As of April 1, 2023, state law requires DHS to complete within six months redeterminations of eligibility for anyone whose case had not been reviewed in last 12 months.

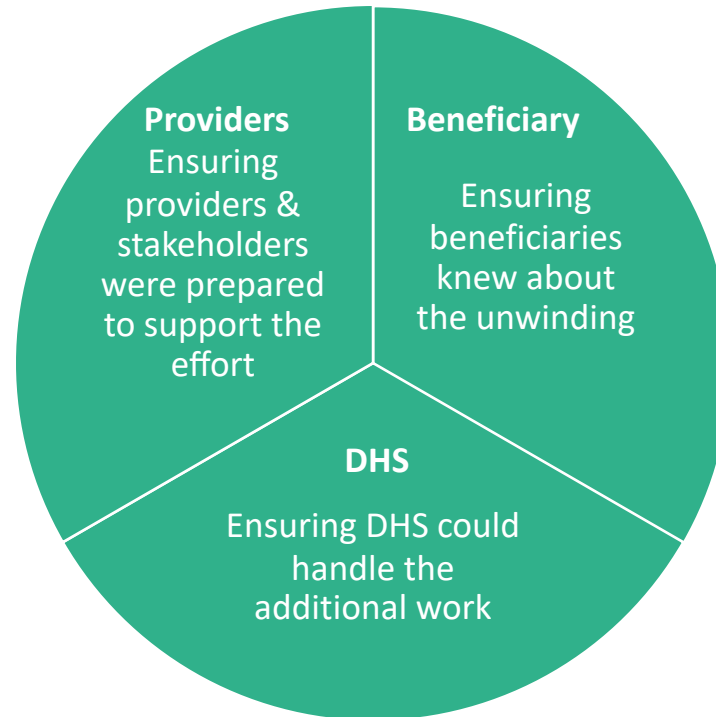
The Impact on Enrollment

At its peak in March 2023, more than 420,000 enrollees remained covered by Medicaid even though they were ineligible or never provided information so DHS could determine their eligibility. At that time, enrollment growth in the programs during the PHE was 25.16%.



Preparation for Unwinding

- ✓ Beneficiary lists
- ✓ Weekly calls
- ✓ Outreach toolkits
- ✓ Outreach grants
- ✓ State agency support



- ✓ Address updates
- ✓ Renewals and reminder notices sent
- ✓ New federal strategies
- ✓ Paid advertising
- ✓ Digital campaigns
- ✓ Texts, emails, alerts
- ✓ Partnerships with community organizations
- ✓ Expanded outreach
- ✓ Enhanced program support

- ✓ Contracted surge support
- ✓ Streamlined processes
- ✓ Cross-divisional work to support eligibility determinations

Factors Impacting Outcomes

In Arkansas, DHS is not surprised by the number of people not responding-called procedural terminations - because many know they no longer are eligible and just aren't returning the forms.

- Arkansas is experiencing record-low unemployment and a rate significantly lower than when the pandemic began. In March 2020, the unemployment rate in Arkansas was 4.9 percent. In July 2023, it was 2.6 percent.
- Arkansas increased the minimum wage twice during the pandemic, likely resulting in many beneficiaries being over income.
- CMS has required some states to pause disenrollments or to reinstate some beneficiaries because of issues surrounding their processes, including those tied to procedural disenrollments. Arkansas is **not** one of these states.

Eligibility Outcomes During Unwinding

Month	Number due for renewal in the month who retained their coverage	Medicaid coverage ended in the month	
		Extended	Regular
April	61,236	44,667	28,135
May	39,848	43,385	25,453
June	50,366	47,426	30,042
July	50,609	39,967	42,312
August	50,662	34,961	37,558
September	45,536	18,545	35,008
Total	298,257	228,951	198,508

If People Lost Coverage

Beneficiaries who lose coverage during the unwinding have options:

- If they failed to turn in requested information during a renewal, they can turn that in and get their coverage reinstated within 30 or 90 days depending on the category of assistance.
- If they believe they lost coverage in error, they can appeal the determination decision.
- If they are over income, they can apply for coverage at healthcare.gov or seek out employer-sponsored coverage.

Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health

The new Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (OSAMH) works to support programs and projects to address behavioral health issues across all DHS programs, determine need for new programs, and ensure that funding is used to meet the needs of Arkansans

Areas of focus include:

- Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services
- Mental Health Treatment Services
- Forensic Services
- State Drug Director
- Prevention and Early Intervention Services



Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health

- Is connected to most divisions of DHS but primarily in:
 - The Division of Aging Adult and Behavioral Health Services (DAABHS) has been responsible for the administration of
 - The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Mental Health Block Grant and Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention Block Grant,
 - SAMHSA discretionary grants
 - State General Revenue supported programs and projects
- AR Medicaid funds most of the mental health services provided in AR through
 - Traditional Medicaid
 - ARHOME
 - The PASSE program

Opportunities for Success

- The Opportunities for Success initiative is a new approach to a work requirement for the expansion population.
- Designed to create meaningful ways for beneficiaries to move from depending on government health insurance coverage to economic independence.
- Beneficiaries who choose not to participate in the workforce development component would remain covered by Medicaid, but would be disenrolled from their qualified health plan and instead receive coverage through traditional fee-for-service Medicaid.
- Awaiting approval from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).



Leadership restructuring



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Questions

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