

NCUIH Applauds CMS Action to Protect Health Care Coverage for Children and Families

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PRESS RELEASE

National Council of Urban Indian Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (September 19, 2023) - Today, the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) issued a statement from its CEO, Francys Crevier, addressing the recent proactive steps the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) took to safeguard the health care coverage of children and families.

“The swift and decisive actions undertaken by CMS, instructing states to promptly reinstate Medicaid and CHIP coverage for children and families who may have been inadvertently disenrolled due to systems and operational errors, are nothing short of lifesaving. Preserving and expanding health care access for Native communities disproportionately impacted by these changes should be a paramount concern for all.”

CMS recently communicated with all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, urging them to investigate potential eligibility system issues that could lead to the unjust disenrollment of individuals, particularly children, from Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), even when they remain eligible. States are now obligated to rectify these issues promptly and reinstate coverage for all affected individuals. Further details can be found [here](#).

Medicaid and CHIP provide essential health care coverage for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. In 2020, over 1.8 million AI/ANs were enrolled in Medicaid, meaning almost 1/5 of the AI/AN population is covered by Medicaid. Of these, 46.2% of Medicaid enrollees are AI/ANs from 0-18, and 46.5% are from 19-64.

The Medicaid Unwinding process is projected to disproportionately impact AI/ANs. [Some estimates](#) show that 12% of AI/AN children will lose Medicaid coverage. NCUIH is actively monitoring the Medicaid Unwinding and continues to work to ensure that policy makers are informed regarding appropriate strategies to ensure all eligible AI/ANs remain enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP.

About NCUIH

The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is the national non-profit organization

devoted to the support and development of quality, accessible, and culturally competent health and public health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) living in urban areas. NCUIH is the only national representative of the 41 Title V Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) under the Indian Health Service (IHS) in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA). NCUIH strives to improve the health of the over 70% of the AI/AN population that lives in urban areas, supported by quality, accessible health care centers.

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