

2024 Medicaid in Montana: Medicaid Expansion

Montana Medicaid provides health care coverage to nearly 300,000 Montanans with low income, including children, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and adults. In 2016, the HELP Act expanded Medicaid to cover adults with incomes up to 133% of the federal poverty level (\$19,391 in 2023).

By implementing Medicaid expansion, Montana has expanded health coverage, improved access to services, controlled costs, and built a stronger health system.

Expand Health Care Coverage

Medicaid expansion provides health care coverage to nearly 110,000 adults with low income.

Implementing the program reduced the number of people without health insurance, **dropping the state's uninsured rate by more than 50%** since 2013.*



Improve Health Care Access & Outcomes

People with health insurance under Medicaid expansion access preventive services & care for chronic conditions.

In 2022**

3,800 people started **diabetes treatment**

6,100 people got treatment for **substance use disorders**

35,000 people accessed **mental health services**

Over time, having coverage contributes to fewer ER visits.

11% decrease in emergency care

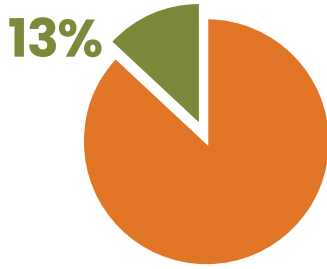
30% decrease in dental conditions

Between their first and third years of having health insurance, the number of Medicaid expansion **enrollees needing emergency care decreased by 11%**. The number of people going to the ER for **preventable dental conditions declined by about 30%**.

Health care costs shifted from more intensive emergency and inpatient care to outpatient services and pharmacy, suggesting improved health outcomes.

Emergency and inpatient costs comprised 28% of expansion member costs during their first year of enrollment, **decreasing to 24% by their third year**.

Control Health Care Costs



The proportion of state general fund spending on Medicaid has remained stable since before Montana expanded Medicaid.

Medicaid has **consistently accounted for about 13% of Montana's state general fund** spending since 2015, the year before Medicaid expansion was implemented.



\$28 million
state budget savings

18% decrease
emergency & inpatient costs

Medicaid expansion has made new federal dollars available to supplement Montana's existing Medicaid funding, helping generate state budget savings.

- Implementing Medicaid expansion generated more than \$28 million in state budget savings.
- By the third year, average emergency and inpatient costs declined over 18% per enrollee.

Build a Stronger Health Care System

Medicaid expansion has helped Montana build a stronger health care system by:



More than doubling referrals for critically needed specialty services for American Indian patients at no cost to the state (from about 16,000 to 35,000).



Reducing uncompensated care costs for critical access hospitals by nearly 60%; all rural hospitals have stayed open since Montana expanded Medicaid.



Helping providers expand services for substance use disorders and mental illness and providing a payment source for people needing care.

*Updated uninsured rate estimates following the conclusion of the Medicaid eligibility process in 2023 were unavailable.
**Most recent data available.



For more information on these findings, visit mthf.org/resource/2024-medicaid-in-montana/