

# PROMOTING A HEALTHY IDAHO:

## Medicaid Impacts Lives, State Economy & Health System



Winter 2020

### **Idahoans are receiving the care they need.**

- Medicaid provides health coverage for low-income Idahoans, including children, seniors, and persons with disabilities. It provides comprehensive care, such as checkups, specialist doctor visits, prescriptions, and more.
- Before Medicaid expansion, many adults living in poverty were uninsured and were sick, mentally and physically. Thanks to Medicaid, most are now receiving care for chronic conditions and regular diagnostic and preventive screenings.
- Adults are accessing critical mental health services and substance use disorder care during these unprecedented and stressful times.
- Medicaid covers coronavirus testing, COVID-19 treatment, and tele-health services.

### **Medicaid is working. The increased needs due to the pandemic and recession are being met.**

- Historically, Medicaid has played a key role during national emergencies and recessions, providing flexible funding and offsetting expenses. The same is true now in Idaho.
- Original projections for the costs of Medicaid did not include the realities of a pandemic, economic recession, and federal relief. Idaho's healthcare needs are radically different than they were a year ago.
- Medicaid expansion is serving as a safety net for thousands of Idaho adults who have lost jobs or income due to the pandemic.
- Medicaid is a crucial source of health coverage for workers whose jobs require them to show up for work during the pandemic, such as home health aides, child care workers, food manufacturers, grocery store workers, and farm workers.
- Medicaid helps families avoid medical debt, making it easier for them to get back on their feet.

### **Cuts to Medicaid during a pandemic are detrimental to the health of Idahoans.**

- Idaho's health system is overwhelmed. Now is not the time to consider cuts to hospitals, doctors, and care facilities.
- Governor Little and the Idaho Legislature must prioritize healthcare during the public health crisis. With an ongoing pandemic and loss of income for many families across the state, every dollar intended to be used for healthcare should be fully invested and not used for anything else.
- For every \$1 we cut from our state Medicaid budget during the pandemic, Idaho will lose a total of \$4.28 to our healthcare economy. As our state continues to respond to the COVID-19 crisis, we must keep Medicaid whole.

### **Federal relief should be used to cover all Medicaid costs.**

- Increased costs to Medicaid are offset by the additional federal Medicaid dollars Idaho is receiving this year.
- Thankfully, Idaho's budget is not in trouble. Governor Little has continuously touted Idaho's strong economic standing, citing high revenues from federal stimulus packages. With strong revenue, our state budget has the capacity to keep Medicaid fully funded without any cuts.
- Thanks to Medicaid expansion, Idaho was better positioned to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and prevent the resulting economic downturn from worsening access to care, financial security, health outcomes, and health disparities.