

**Alabama**  
**Plan First Medicaid Family Planning**  
**Section 1115 Quarterly Report**  
**Demonstration Year 13, Quarter 2**  
**Fiscal Quarter 4**  
**November 29, 2013**

**Introduction**

The Alabama Medicaid Plan First program began October 1, 2000, and represents a collaborative effort between the Alabama Medicaid Agency and the Alabama Department of Public Health to increase the availability of family planning services to all women of childbearing age (19-55) with incomes at or below 133% of the federal poverty level that would not otherwise qualify for Medicaid. Plan First was predicated on the recognized need for continued family planning once SOBRA Medicaid eligibility for pregnancy was terminated after the postpartum period and for those women who would not otherwise qualify for Medicaid unless pregnant. The Plan First Demonstration Program allows the Alabama Medicaid Agency to extend coverage for family planning services to women ages 19 to 55 that are not currently eligible for Medicaid, but would be eligible if they became pregnant. Enrollees can choose any provider enrolled in Plan First for services, including health department clinics, community health centers and non-Title X providers. Contraception and surgical sterilization services, lab tests, pap smears, HIV counseling and smoking cessation are all covered by Medicaid under the waiver. The program's overall goal is to reduce unintended pregnancies, and positive progress has been made over time in meeting goals and performance targets.

**Executive Summary**

- **Brief description of Demonstration population**

The Plan First program extends Medicaid eligibility for family planning services to all women of childbearing age (19 through 55) with incomes at or below 133% of the federal poverty level who would not otherwise qualify for Medicaid.

- **Goal of Demonstration**

**Goal 1.** Increase the portion of income eligible women, ages 19 – 55, enrolled in Plan First and reduce age, race, and geographic disparities among enrollees

**Goal 2.** Maintain the high level of awareness of the Plan First program among program enrollees.

**Goal 3.** Increase the portion of Plan First enrollees using family planning services initially after enrollment and in subsequent years of enrollment by improving access to services and increasing the rate of return visits for care.

**Goal 4.** Increase the portion of family planning visits that include referrals for primary care services where indicated.

**Goal 5.** Maintain birth rates among Plan First service users that are lower than the estimated birth rates that would be occurring in the absence of the Plan First demonstration.

- **Program highlights**

Plan First has continued to function well, with enrollment for the key participant group, women ages 20-29, including nearly all the women estimated to be eligible. Through Plan First, women are able to take advantage of all family planning services that are offered through the Alabama Medicaid Agency. Any qualified provider can enroll as a provider for the Plan First Program. Direct services are augmented with care coordination and tracking for “high risk” and “at risk” women to ensure compliance with the woman’s chosen birth control method. Care coordination services are designed to provide special assistance to those women who are at high risk for an unintended pregnancy and allows for enhanced contraceptive education on appropriate use of the chosen method, further assurance of correct and continued usage, and successful family planning with spacing of pregnancies. Effective for dates of service October 1, 2012, the Alabama Medicaid Agency began covering selected smoking cessation products for recipients enrolled in the Plan First program. Products covered are nicotine patches, nicotine gum, nicotine lozenges, bupropion tablets and varenicline tablets. Education on this benefit continues to be available for new providers and appropriate staff as an on-demand webcast through the ADPH television network.

<b>Demonstration Year</b>	<b>Begin Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Quarterly Report Due Date (60 days following end of quarter)</b>
<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>April 1</b>	<b>June 30</b>	<b>August 30</b>
<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>July 1</b>	<b>September 30</b>	<b>November 30</b>
<b>Quarter 3</b>	<b>October 1</b>	<b>December 31</b>	<b>February 28</b>
<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>January 1</b>	<b>March 31</b>	<b>May 31</b>

- **Significant program changes**

Initially enrollment goals were met at the end of the first demonstration period but net enrollment declined over the next five years due to the requirement for annual re-enrollment in Medicaid to retain coverage in Plan First. By DY12, however, overall enrollment was about 71% of potential eligibles, with the number of women ages 20-29 enrolled basically equivalent to the number

estimated to be eligible. Alabama Medicaid Agency began using a Social Security Administration data match in January 2010 to verify citizenship, which has helped to streamline the enrollment process. Currently, Alabama uses Express-Lane Eligibility (ELE) by relying on the income findings from the SNAP or TANF programs to determine the eligibility for many children and Plan First women, and uses an administrative renewal for Plan First women with children. Going forward, Medicaid will continue increasing service utilization in the Plan First Program by improving communication with enrollees on enrollment and coverage issues, and making improvements to our mechanisms for verifying eligibility to facilitate enrollment for new participants. The placement of Care Coordinators in private provider offices to enhance progress toward these goals has been received favorably and will be expanded as allowed.

Beginning in October 2012 coverage of nicotine substitutes and referral to the Alabama Department of Public Health Tobacco Quitline were provided to applicable recipients. A satellite training opportunity was offered to providers and Plan First care coordinators in September 2012 to educate them re Plan First program changes, updates with the waiver renewal, and coverage of smoking cessation. Training is still available for new providers and care coordinators via the Alabama Department of Public Health Training Network's on-demand webcast. Since providing coverage of smoking cessation products, more than 866 claims have been submitted for payment, indicating recipients are taking advantage of the new coverage option.

- **Policy issues and challenges**

Changes in eligibility determination, such as the implementation of Express-lane Eligibility in February 2013, and acceptance of insured women will increase the number of never-before-enrolled women enrolling in Plan First, and will increase the portion of women who renew eligibility within 60 days of the end of the previous enrollment period. The changes in determination processes should impact low income women, but not the women automatically enrolled from SOBRA maternity, and the acceptance of enrollment of women with other forms of insurance should impact women with TPL (third party liability). Alabama Medicaid implemented, with the waiver renewal, the use of an administrative renewal for Plan First women without children, which was not allowed in the previous period. These measures should ease barriers to enrollment and re-enrollment and will shift the composition of the enrolled population closer to that of the eligible population.

The Alabama Medicaid Agency submitted their initial transition plan to CMS on 6/13/2012. On November 13, 2012 Governor Robert Bentley announced that the state of Alabama would not set up a state-run health insurance exchange and would not opt into an expansion of Medicaid required under the Affordable Care Act. On June 27, 2013, Alabama Medicaid was granted an automatic extension of its 1115 Waiver by CMS, to run through December 31, 2014.

## **Enrollment**

Since the requirement for annual renewal was implemented in February 2006, the portion of potentially eligible women who actually enrolled in Plan First has fluctuated between 50% and 70%. This is lower than the target proportion of 75%, but is higher in the most recent demonstration year than in previous years. In 2011 enrollment reached 67% of estimated eligible women, and in DY12 overall enrollment was about 71% of potential eligibles. Enrollment rates for the youngest group are not really reliable because of the rapid turnover in this age group. Enrollment rates are highest in the age 20-29 group and much lower for older women, with the numbers for the 20-29 age group basically equivalent to the number estimated to be eligible. In DY11 and DY12 there was an increase in enrollment for Hispanic, Asian and Native American women.

As mentioned, Medicaid proposes to continue increasing utilization in Plan First by improving communication with enrollees and making improvements to our mechanisms for verifying eligibility. At or near the first working day of each month, before the regular renewal packets are sent, Medicaid sends DHR a file of recipients approaching redetermination that will be matched by DHR with their SNAP and TANF data. Those cases where all individuals match will receive an Express-lane eligibility renewal and those who do not match will be sent a regular review package so they can renew. Individuals who are renewed through Express-lane eligibility receive a letter informing them their case has been renewed, and there is no action required of an eligibility worker or the family. Alabama implemented automated Express-lane Eligibility renewals, an expedited renewal completed totally by the system without worker or recipient participation, on Plan First women as well as children in February, 2013. With changes in the system using the automated ELE feature, tracking of recipients enrolled with ELE is no longer available as indicators added to match with TANF and SNAP are removed from recipients who are no longer active through ELE. Going forward, Alabama Medicaid will continue to monitor enrollment trends on an ongoing basis, quarterly and annually.

Medicaid began automatic Express-lane eligibility updates on pending applications effective the end of June 2013, allowing for more efficient processing of these cases beginning with this time period (July – September). Medicaid previously had only automated renewals for ELE and the application process was still manual. Active Plan First women determined eligible through ELE (as of the last day of the month): July 2013: 46,023; August 2013: 48,912; September 2013: 51,680.

- **Enrollment figures:** enrollees and participants within the Demonstration in addition to member months, as outlined in STCs 25 & 33. This Demonstration has two eligible populations, as described in STC14:
  - Population 1: women losing Medicaid pregnancy coverage at the conclusion of 60 days postpartum
  - Population 2: women who have an income at or below 133 percent of the FPL.

<b>DY 12</b>	<b>Quarter 1: April – June 2013</b>		
	<b>Population 1</b>	<b>Population 2</b>	<b>Total Population</b>
<b># of Newly Enrolled</b>	5,730	13,087	113,959
<b># of Total Enrollees</b>	5,730	13,087	113,959
<b># of Participants</b>	*	*	40,188♦
<b># of Member Months</b>	11,481	26,873	244,068

<b>DY 12</b>	<b>Quarter 2: July - September 2013</b>		
	<b>Population 1</b>	<b>Population 2</b>	<b>Total Population</b>
<b># of Newly Enrolled</b>	6,226	12,272	116,204
<b># of Total Enrollees</b>	6,226	12,272	116,204
<b># of Participants</b>	*	*	35,297♦
<b># of Member Months</b>	12,289	24833	293,118

\*Currently Alabama Medicaid is unable to track Populations 1 & 2 ongoing as once a recipient “flips” from maternity to Plan First after the 60<sup>th</sup> postpartum day or is awarded Plan First coverage, they do not stay in that group and become part of the total population the following month – they do not stay in Population 1 (flips) or Population 2 (awards) ongoing. Likewise there is no mechanism for tracking which flips or awards are active participants, only the active participants for the total population. Medicaid is also unable to track those enrolled with Expresslane Eligibility ongoing as markers identifying those recipients are removed when matching with SNAP and TANF data.

♦Of the total population of eligibles, this is the number of recipients with a billable service during the quarter (active participants).

## **Service and Providers**

### **• Service Utilization**

Plan First's goal is to have 70% enrollee utilization, along with a 70% rate for 12 and 24 month return visits for those using services during the renewal period. While the number of service users increased in DY11 compared to DY10, the number of enrollees increased as well, so the net portion of enrollees using services was below 45%, accompanied by a decline in the portion of women with Medicaid deliveries in the year and previous year that used Plan First services in DY11, which may be in part because more women are receiving family planning services during the postpartum period when they are still covered under Medicaid maternity care. By DY12, however, the portion of enrollees using services increased from 47% to 52% of enrollees, which is improved but still lower than the targeted population. The portion of women using second visits in the demonstration year following their initial visit decreased from 62% in DY11 for DY10 service users to 46% in DY12 for DY11 users. All Alabama counties currently have public and private provider options for Plan First care, which may be an asset for continued progress toward this goal.

There was also a decline in the portion of women with Medicaid deliveries who used Plan First services in DY11, Based on these statistics the performance targets still have not been met but continue to move closer than performance in previous demonstration years.

Since Plan First began providing smoking cessation products and counseling to recipients on October 1, 2012, recipients have been taking advantage of the new benefit. In the quarter ending September 30, 2013, ADPH referred 320 recipients for smoking cessation treatment and counseling. ADPH has referred a total of 1,230 Plan First recipients since October 1, 2012. During the reporting quarter there were 1042 claims paid for smoking cessation products for a total of \$14,370.33.

### **• Provider participation**

Providers must enroll with Medicaid to participate in the Plan First program, but participation is voluntary. They must be certified to participate in the Alabama Medicaid program, be in full compliance with federal civil rights and anti-discrimination legislation, provide services to clients until they elect to terminate care, provide family planning on a voluntary and confidential basis, and assure freedom of choice of family planning method unless medically contraindicated. In DY10, 4 counties gained a private provider and by DY11 only 2 counties did not have private provider participation. Currently all counties have public provider options for Plan First care. The portion of women using private sources for Plan First services remains relatively stable.

## **Program Outreach Awareness and Notification**

### **• General Outreach and Awareness**



Outreach strategies include relationship building and partnerships with other programs, such as maternal health programs, to link patients to Plan First. The targeted recipient population is young adults ages 19 – 29. Training of private providers to outreach targeted populations, distribute marketing materials to CHIP clinics/providers and flyers containing “coupons” to pass on to family and friends are also outreach strategies. Funding for these outreach programs comes from the State’s Public Health Department. Medicaid will continue its efforts in provider outreach through brochures, Alert notices, website updates, and publications such as the “Provider Insider”.

General community based outreach, provided by the ADPH Care Coordinators through the use of posters, brochures, presentations and booths at health fairs, is an ongoing activity. Care Coordinators contact women by phone or mail who have just had a Medicaid delivery. These women are advised of their automatic enrollment in Plan First and how they can obtain services.

Print ad and commercial streaming was purchased for use at the **al.com** website, Alabama’s largest online newspaper, from January 31, 2013 through May 31, 2013. Plan First was advertised through al.com’s search engine research program specifically targeting the internet usage on over 12,000 nationally known web sites of those women who appear to meet the Plan First eligibility requirements, with banners, print ads and commercials all providing direct links to the Plan First web site. As of the end of the campaign, May 31, 2013, the al.com advertising linked 4775 individuals to the Plan First web site. The Plan First hotline received 991 calls during the reporting quarter, for a total of 3,637 calls since October 1, 2011.

### **Program Evaluation, Transition Plan, and Monitoring**

The Alabama Medicaid Agency tracks complaints/grievances received from recipients and providers related to Plan First services. During the quarter ending 9/30/2013, two Plan First complaints were received at Medicaid from recipients, and information was provided to the recipients as requested.

The quarterly audit submitted by the eleven Public Health Areas identified that women received a Plan First care coordination service. Of those 8713 women received their annual face-to-face risk assessment and 5171 were identified as high risk for an unintended pregnancy and offered care coordination. A total of 1049 audits were completed for this quarter and the compliance rate was 99%. No complaints or grievances were received at ADPH during this quarter.

As specified in the transition plan submitted to CMS 6/13/12, the Agency intends to expand enrollment using the “Flip” process currently in place for recipients who “flip” from maternity coverage to Plan First coverage after the 60<sup>th</sup> postpartum day. This would allow for a seamless transition from the Plan First category to the expanded coverage category should coverage expansion go into effect January 1, 2014. This process already works effectively for transition from maternity to family planning coverage, and will likewise facilitate transition to full coverage.

## Quarterly Expenditures

<b>Demonstration Year 12 October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013</b>				
<b>Reporting Quarter*</b>	<b>Service Expenditures as Reported on CMS-64</b>	<b>Administrative Expenditures as Reported on CMS-64</b>	<b>Total Expenditures as Reported on CMS-64</b>	<b>Expenditures as requested on CMS-37</b>
<b>Quarter 2 Expenditures</b>	\$10,114,378.05	\$59,221.11	\$10,173,599.16	\$8,550,052

\*Reporting quarters for waiver renewal do not coincide with quarters in fiscal year. See chart on page 2 for reporting quarters and report due dates.

### Activities for Next Quarter

State-wide outreach will continue on an on-going basis with general community based efforts provided by the ADPH Care Coordinators using posters, brochures, presentations and booths at health fairs. Care Coordinators will also continue to contact women by phone or mail who have recently had a Medicaid delivery to advise them of automatic enrollment in Plan First and how they can obtain services.

Providers will continue to have access to the Smoking Cessation Initiative satellite training, and materials for instruction, promotion and patient awareness through Medicaid and ADPH. Responses to questions regarding smoking from recipient surveys will be evaluated as they are received and help to establish a baseline for further evaluation of smoking cessation products and counseling. The expectation is that this participation will continue as the program is promoted by care coordinators in the Maternity Care Program and Plan First. Providers will continue to receive education, updates and Medicaid program/policy issues through the "Provider Insider" and through "Alert" messages sent by the Agency. Ongoing program evaluation will also continue through the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health. Alabama Medicaid will also be working to finalize transition plans for January 2014.