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Medicaid Expansion Promotes Family Stability

Columbus, Ohio – The Ohio Department of Medicaid’s 2018 assessment of the Medicaid expansion population has good news for Ohio’s children. Nearly one third of the Expansion population are parents, and Medicaid is contributing to the stability of their families. 57.5 percent of continuous enrollees who are parents said that Medicaid made it easier to provide food and housing for their families. Further, Medicaid expansion enrollees are finding jobs or securing a higher income. 71.1 percent of those who discontinued Medicaid did so because of a job or an increase in income.

“This data shows why the Medicaid Expansion is so important to children,” said Brandi Slaughter, CEO of Voices for Ohio’s Children. “Getting parents insured and keeping them insured means that their children are more likely to be insured and stay covered. Traditional Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program and Medicaid expansion provides critical health coverage to more than 1.2 million children in Ohio. These programs work hand-in-hand and have helped our state achieve a historic percentage of covered kids.”

Before the 2014 expansion, parents could not get Medicaid if their income exceeded 90 percent of the federal poverty level (\$18,702 for a family of three in 2018). With the expansion the same family can earn up to \$28,676. Without the Medicaid expansion nearly all full-time work would result in a parent not being eligible for Medicaid.

“Medicaid’s assessment reveals that in Ohio, parents who are covered experience a greater sense of financial security. Medicaid expansion insurance offers assurance to families, reduces medical debt and financial hardship, so that parents are better able to take care of their kids and not have to make tough decisions between seeking healthcare and paying the light bill. These parents are more likely to work and keep jobs because their health needs are addressed, further strengthening the family.” Slaughter continued.

Parental mental illness can have a negative impact on the child’s behavior. The report shows that those continuously enrolled in the Medicaid expansion program that screened positive for depression or anxiety had fewer problems (22.1%) securing the medications they needed than those who were unenrolled (51.2%).

“The report clearly demonstrates that parents on the Medicaid expansion are more easily able to provide for their children and to secure treatment for their own medical issues, also protecting their children. This is a win/win for families,” Slaughter concluded.

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Voices for Ohio’s Children shapes policy that puts Ohio’s children first and improves their well-being. Our vision is for all of Ohio’s children—from birth through adulthood—to be safe, healthy, educated, connected, and employable. Voices is also a member of Advocates of Ohio’s Future.