

10 ways Minnesota Medicaid matters to you



1 Medicaid is the largest single source of health insurance in Minnesota.

Medicaid, known as Medical Assistance in Minnesota, covers more people in the state than Medicare and more people than any single commercial insurer. That means Medical Assistance plays a key role in the state's all-time low uninsurance rate of 3.8%.



2 Medicaid serves as the foundation of Minnesota's health care infrastructure.

Medicaid contributes significantly to the state's health care sector, supporting public health infrastructure, hospitals, mental health centers, home care, community clinics, nursing homes, physicians, dentists and many other health professionals. It serves as a lifeline to Greater Minnesota providers. By significantly reducing the number of uninsured Minnesotans, Medical Assistance decreases the cost of uncompensated care that can threaten a clinic or hospital's sustainability and reduces the amount of medical debt owed by Minnesotans.



3 Minnesota's health care tops other states.

We invest in the health of our communities through Medicaid, and it shows. Health care quality varies widely across the United States, and Minnesota consistently outperforms other states.



4 Medicaid helps the youngest among us start out their lives on the right foot.

Medical Assistance covers 3 out of 10 births in the state. It has an even greater impact on the Black and American Indian communities, covering 8 out of 10 births of Black babies and 9 out of 10 births of American Indian babies. Children who have access to Medicaid have better health in adulthood, greater attendance during school, lower high school dropout rates, increased college attendance, and pay more in taxes as adults compared to adults who lacked health insurance as children.



5 Medicaid is one of the smartest investments in Minnesota's future.

Insuring 592,000 children means Medical Assistance covers about 41% of the state's kids. Childhood is a critical time for brain development, school readiness, education and lifelong health. Gaps in insurance during this time lead to foregone care, unmet medical needs and unfilled prescriptions that can change the trajectory of a child's life. Studies have shown that every additional year of Medicaid coverage for children compared to being uninsured contributes to their higher earnings, hours worked and labor productivity as adults.



6 Minnesota devotes the majority of its Medicaid spending to our most vulnerable residents — the elderly and people with disabilities.

Minnesota spends more than 60% of Medical Assistance funds on services and support needed for people with disabilities or who are 65 or older. However, this group makes up only 14% of enrollees. About 65% of Minnesota Medicaid enrollees are families and kids.



7 Medicaid pays for more mental health services for Minnesotans than anyone else.

Mental health matters at every stage of life and requires a continuum of services, ranging from prevention to recovery. Unfortunately, the number of Minnesotans experiencing mental health issues has risen sharply in recent years, mirroring a national trend. That increase has particularly affected Minnesota's youth. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that as many as one in five children experience a mental health disorder in a given year. Minnesota Medicaid provides 20% of all mental health treatment in the state. Minnesota must ensure that youth and adults alike can get the help they need, when they need it.



8 Medicaid covers half of substance use disorder treatments in the state.

Substance use disorders continue to devastate families and communities in Minnesota. Opioids account for more overdoses than any other drug, and an increasing number of Minnesotans are losing their lives. In 2018, there were 343 opioid-involved deaths in Minnesota. In 2023, there were 1,274. An estimated 450,000 to 500,000 Minnesotans are directly impacted by addictions. Most people who enter drug and alcohol treatment complete it and are successful in reducing or eliminating their substance use.



9 Medicaid covers half of long-term care costs for Minnesota.

Medicaid — not Medicare — is the primary source of coverage for people who need long-term care services, like nursing homes, in the state. Meanwhile, Medicaid long-term care services and supports keep people in the community and out of institutions.



10 Medicaid serves people of all backgrounds across Minnesota, especially in Greater Minnesota.

While the majority of Medical Assistance enrollees are white, Medical Assistance covers a greater proportion of Minnesotans who are Black, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander or multiracial. And it has a bigger impact on Greater Minnesota. Minnesota Medicaid enrollment is split nearly evenly between the seven-county metro area and Greater Minnesota, however Minnesotans who live in Greater Minnesota are more likely to get their health insurance through Medicaid than those in the metro area.