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Minnesota celebrates 50th anniversary of Medicaid legislation *State's Medical Assistance program on forefront of health reform*

This week, Minnesota is celebrating 50 years since Medicaid was established, starting Minnesota on a path to providing quality coverage for low-income residents while leading the way for other states in innovation.

On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed legislation establishing Medicaid for low-income adults, children, pregnant women and people with disabilities, as well as Medicare for the elderly. Minnesota was among the first six states to establish its own Medicaid program, Medical Assistance, when federal matching funds became available to states in January 1966.

“The creation of Medicaid truly transformed health care in America, helping countless families across the country and in Minnesota,” said Human Services Commissioner Lucinda Jesson. “For the past 50 years, this state has continued to build and improve on this critical program to ensure generations to come will be able to access affordable quality health care.”

Today, Medical Assistance is the state's largest publicly funded health care program, serving more than 1 million Minnesotans. Over the years, the program has grown significantly, seeing coverage more than double in the last decade alone. As an early adopter of Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act – and one of 31 states to adopt the full Medicaid expansion to date – Minnesota has continued to expand access to health care in recent years, reaching thousands of people with low-incomes who otherwise wouldn't have been covered.

Approximately one in five Minnesotans – and one in three children – are now enrolled in Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare, the state's health care program for the working poor.

In Minnesota, Medicaid, which began as a basic health coverage program, continues to evolve. Medical Assistance is helping drive health reform through our nation-leading Integrated Health Partnerships (IHP), an Accountable Care Organization demonstration. Built around a new payment model that prioritizes quality, preventive health care and rewards providers for reaching mutually targeted health goals, the reform initiative has delivered \$75 million in savings in its first two years, benefiting taxpayers while continuing to improve health care for people with low incomes. The department plans to extend the IHP and other value-based reforms to half of all Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare enrollees by the end of 2018.

Enrollment for Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare continues year round. For more information, visit [the department's Medical Assistance webpage](#).