Pressroom

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Governor Bullock Waives CHIP Copays, Authorizes Continued Medicaid Coverage for Low-Income Montanans and Immediate Licensure for Out-of-State Health Care Providers

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Governor Steve Bullock today announced measures to waive out-of-pocket copayments for low-income Montanans covered by Healthy Montana Kids, ensure Montanans covered by Medicaid won't lose coverage for inability to pay premiums, and allow immediate registration of out-of-state licensed providers in Montana to strengthen the state's health care response to COVID-19.

"Access to quality health care is more crucial now than ever," Governor Bullock said. **"Today's actions protect affordable care for low-income Montanans and expand our ability to rapidly respond to COVID-19 by increasing the number of health care providers who can serve the immediate health care needs in our state."**

Montanans with Medicaid and CHIP receive a comprehensive benefit plan which including features important during this unprecedented time. Members have access to services delivered through telehealth, behavioral health services, and coverage for most 90-day maintenance medications.

Effective immediately, the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) is waiving all copay requirements under the Healthy Montana Kids Plan for more than 21,000 children during the emergency period. The Medicaid and Healthy Montana Kids Programs cover more than 100,000 children in Montana, but co-payments for all other adults and children covered by these programs were eliminated by the 2019 Legislature.

The department will no longer suspend health coverage for lack of payment of Medicaid premiums. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act requires states to keep people covered by Medicaid and CHIP in order to receive the enhanced state Medicaid funds the act provides. During the uncertain financial times for working families, this will ensure families don't experience a barrier to accessing care during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Today's actions also authorize the immediate registration of out-of-state licensed health care professionals in Montana. As provided in state law, the Governor is directing the Department of Labor & Industry (DLI) to implement an interstate licensure registration for out-of-state health care providers, which will allow qualified providers to begin practicing in Montana immediately and assist the state in responding to COVID-19.

Licensed professionals from out-of-state can register in Montana to work for the duration of the Governor's emergency declaration. There is no fee and registration only requires DLI to verify licensure in another state.

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