



GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project Monthly Meeting

November 26, 2024

Agenda

- New Health Equity Leads
- Focus Areas Moving Forward
- Georgia Pathways to Coverage™
- Next Session and Resources
- Wrap Up



GA FLEX Health Equity Leads



Karen Holtz, MT (ASCP), MS, CPHQ

Education Lead

karen.holtz@allianthealth.org

Karen has over 20 years experience in leading performance improvement programs as well as providing advisory services to hospitals. She recently led the Learning and Action Networks (LANs) in the Hospital Quality Improvement Contractor (HQIC) program.

Karen holds a master's degree in healthcare management from the University of Pittsburgh.



Melody "Mel" Brown, MSM

State Quality Manager - Georgia

melody.brown@allianthealth.org

Melody has over 40 years of health care experience, including varied roles at Alliant Health Solutions, where she works on the CMS contract for the Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO).

As Georgia's State Quality Manager, her focus is on quality improvement processes and interventions for health care entities throughout the state.



Polling Question 1

1. Have you shared your health equity strategic plans with leadership?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

2024 Gap Analysis: Fully Implemented

Doing Well:

- Workforce training is provided (75%) **Workforce Training**
- Provides cultural competency education (75%) **Workforce Training**
- Self-respecting methodology to collect SDOH data (80%)
Data Collection and Utilization
- Patients screened for language access (84%)
Health Literacy, Cultural Competency

Needs Improvement:

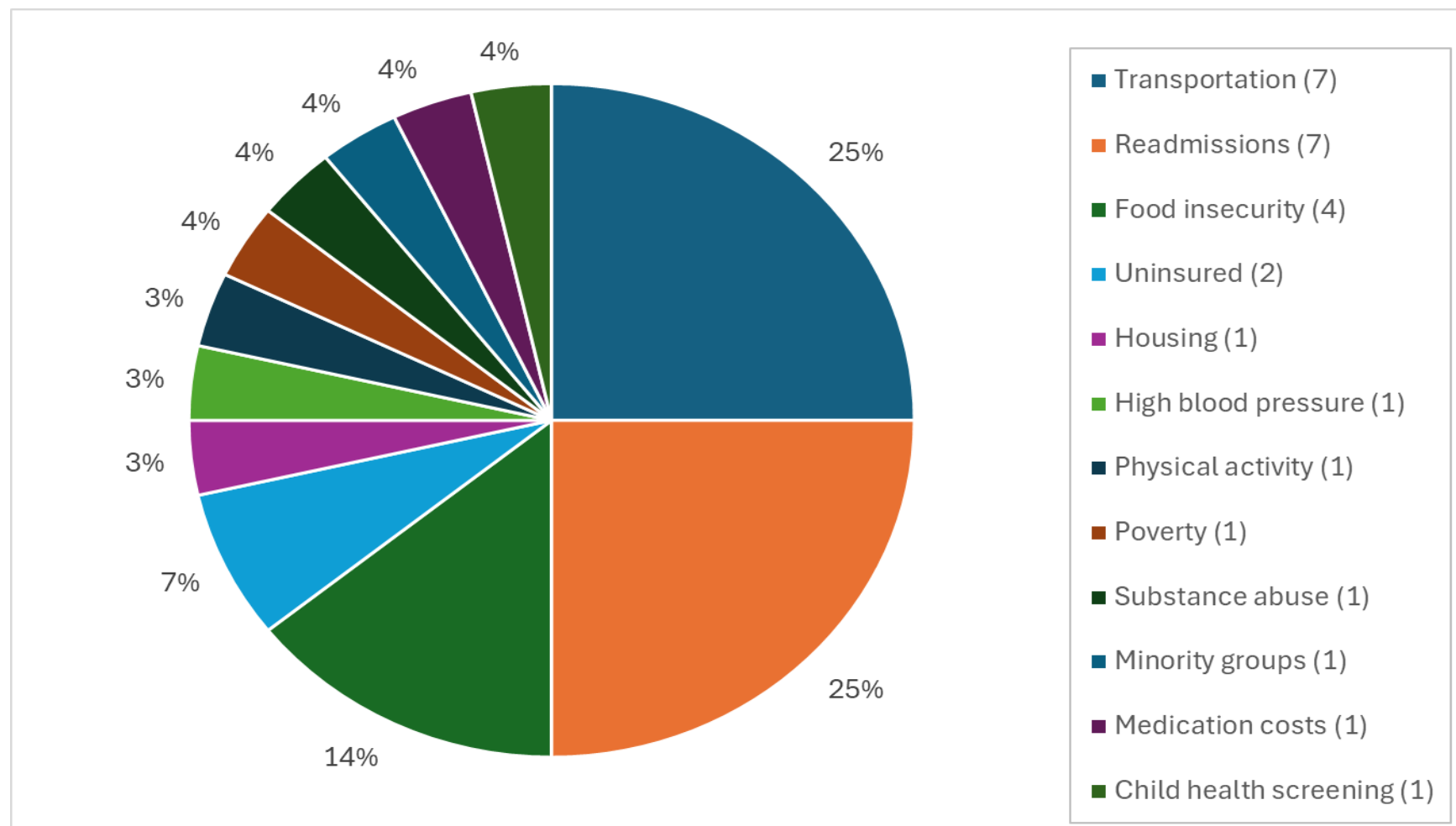
- Analyzes SDOH “Z code” data (32%) **Data Collection and Utilization**
- Self-reporting methodology to collect sexual orientation and gender identify data (35%)
Data Collection and Utilization
- Data demonstrating health equity gaps are shared broadly (37%)
Data Collection and Utilization
- Stratifies patient safety and quality measures (e.g., 30-day readmission rates) by race, ethnicity (37%) **Data Stratification**

2023 Needs Assessment (Q14)

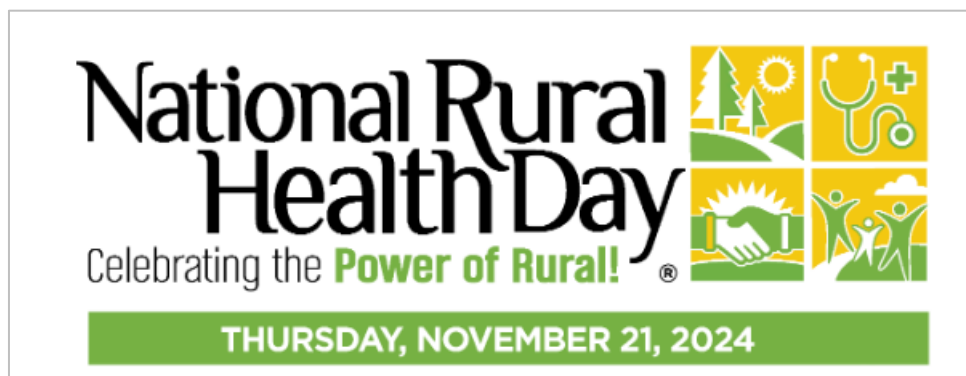
- Assistance programs and services provided locally or by state or federal government
- What the state can provide
- How to document z codes for billing



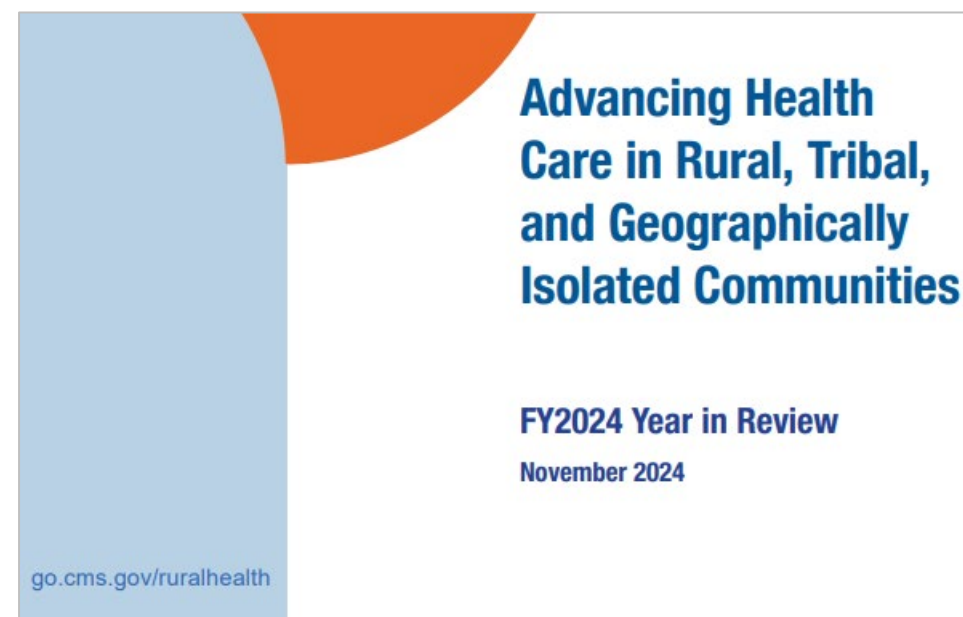
Strategic Plans – Identified Priority Population 1



Celebrating Rural Health



Tell us in Chat:
How did you celebrate
Rural Health Day?



<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/2024-advancing-health-care-rtgi-communities-year-review.pdf>

Guest Speaker



Grant Thomas

Deputy Commissioner
Georgia Department of Community Health
Atlanta, Georgia

Grant Thomas serves as the deputy commissioner of the Georgia Department of Community Health. In this role, he helps lead the state agency that oversees Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids, the State Health Benefit Plan, the Healthcare Facility Regulation Division, the Office of Health Planning, the State Office of Rural Health, among other divisions and offices. Grant earned both his bachelor's degree in political science with Honors and master's degree in business administration from the University of Georgia.



Georgia Pathways to Coverage™

Marketing & Outreach | 2024



Georgia Pathways to Coverage™

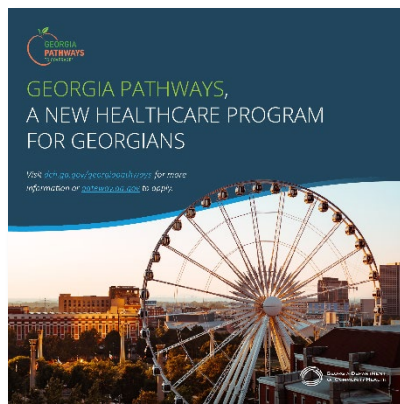


Georgia Pathways to Coverage™ Overview



What is Pathways?

Pathways is free health insurance that gives uninsured Georgians, who are not eligible for other forms of Medicaid, **a new opportunity to gain access to healthcare coverage** through Medicaid. Pathways launched on **July 1, 2023**.



Pathways is designed for adults who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Georgia Resident
- U.S. citizen or legally residing non-citizen
- Between 19 and 64 years of age
- Have a household income of up to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). For example, in 2024, this equals:
 - \$15,060 per year or \$1,255 on average per month for one person
 - \$25,820 per year or \$2,151 on average per month for a family of three
- Completing at least 80 hours of qualifying activities per month
- Don't qualify for any other type of Medicaid
- Not incarcerated

Individuals can apply for Medicaid coverage, including Pathways

ONLINE at gateway.ga.gov

IN-PERSON at a DFCS office location, listed on dfcs.ga.gov/locations

BY MAIL to a local DFCS office

BY PHONE at **1-877-423-4746** or **711** for those who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have difficulty speaking

Georgia Pathways Goals

Pathways was launched to improve access, affordability, and quality of healthcare in Georgia.



The Pathways strategy works to:

- **Improve the health of low-income Georgians** by increasing access to affordable healthcare coverage by encouraging work and other employment-related activities
- Reduce the number of **uninsured Georgians**
- Promote member transition to **commercial health insurance**
- **Empower Georgia Pathways participants** to be active participants and consumers of their healthcare
- Support newly eligible member enrollment in **employer-sponsored insurance**
- Increase the number of persons who become **employed**
- **Increase wage growth** for those who are employed
- Ensure the **long-term, fiscal sustainability** of the Medicaid program



Healthcare Coverage Options in Georgia

Georgia has a variety of state programs to encourage access to affordable, quality health care for its residents and reduce the uninsured population.



Traditional Medicaid Coverage (1a)

*A medical assistance program that provides **healthcare coverage to Georgians who meet specific eligibility** criteria, including limited income and resources.*

Medicaid coverage may be available to different groups of individuals, including:

- Pregnant Women
- Children under 19
- Individuals 65 and over
- Legally Blind
- Individuals with a disability
- Individuals needing or receiving nursing home care
- Parent or caretaker with child under 19

Apply at gateway.ga.gov



Georgia Pathways to Coverage (1b)

*A category of Medicaid coverage for **low-income Georgians** who meet **qualifying activities requirements** and are not otherwise eligible for traditional Medicaid coverage.*

Pathways coverage may be available to individuals who:

- Are between 19-64 years old
- Have a household income of up to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). For example, in 2024, this equals:
 - \$15,060/year or \$1,255 on average per month for one person
 - \$25,820/year or \$2,151 on average per month for a family of three
- Are completing at least 80 hours of qualifying activities per month



Georgia Access (2)

*The State's program for Georgians to **shop for and enroll** in high-quality, comprehensive, and **affordable health insurance**.*

Georgia Access is available to all Georgians, but is intended for individuals who:

- Have a household income above 100% of the FPL
- Do not qualify for any type of Medicaid
- Do not already receive coverage through their employer or school

Enroll on georgiaaccess.gov

Meet Luke: A Pathways Member

Luke has been a member of the Georgia Pathways to Coverage program since 2023. Listen as he shares his experience and why he is glad to be a member of Georgia Pathways.



Click the photo above to be linked to Luke's interview about his journey with Georgia Pathways to Coverage.

Learn More and Get Involved!

The Pathways Outreach Team is interested in connecting with community influencers across the state of Georgia.



Next Steps:

1. Share a list of upcoming January community events for the Pathways event team to attend to share Pathways resources and provide live application support
2. Share Pathways resources with the relevant points of contact at your health center
3. Email the Pathways Outreach Team with additional questions, feedback, or for support in connecting uninsured patients to Pathways

PATHWAYS OUTREACH TEAM

georgia.pathways@dch.ga.gov

LEARN MORE ABOUT PATHWAYS

pathways.georgia.gov



Appendix

Patients First Act of 2019



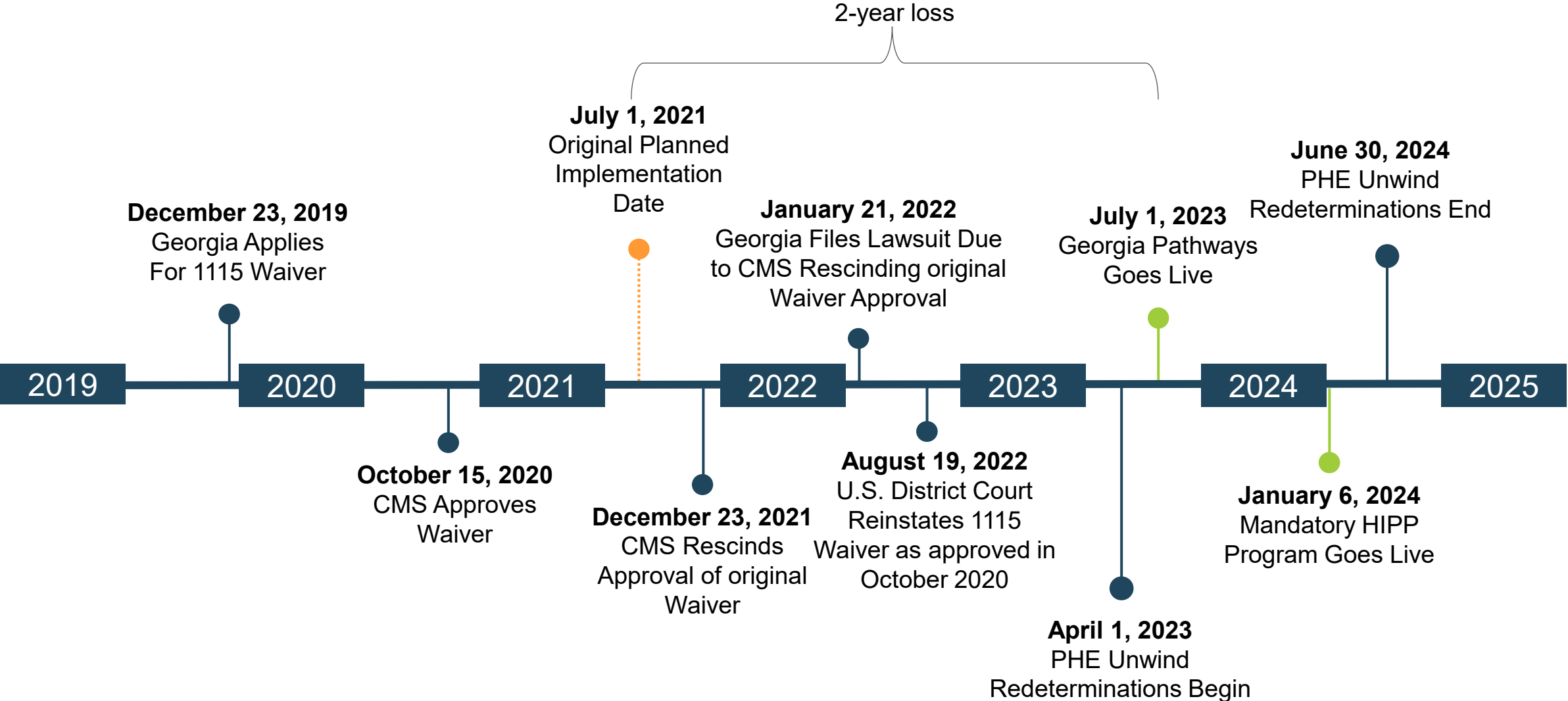
Background:

- Signed **March 27, 2019**
- Granted DCH the **authority to submit a Section 1115 waiver** to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Granted the Governor authority to submit **one or more Section 1332 innovation waivers** to the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Treasury

Key Points:

- 1115 waiver must be submitted on or before **June 30, 2020**
 - Allowed increase in Medicaid eligibility to a **max of 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)**
 - Granted **authority to implement** the 1115 waiver
- 1332 waiver must be submitted on or before **December 31, 2021**
 - Granted **authority to implement** one or more 1332 waivers
 - Led to the establishment of a **reinsurance program** and a **State Based Exchange**

Pathways Program Timeline



2023 Uninsured Population Data



United States Census Bureau’s uninsured population data in Georgia in 2023.

Key takeaways:

- As of the 2023 Census data, there are an estimated **1,223,761 (11.4%) uninsured Georgians**, of which 289,804 (24%) are under 100% of the FPL
- In 2023, the largest group of uninsured Georgians below 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) was between the age of 19 – 64.

Georgia Uninsured by Age Below 100% FPL (2023)	
Under 19 <i>Potentially eligible for traditional Medicaid</i>	38,358
19 – 64 <i>Potentially eligible for traditional Medicaid or Pathways</i>	246,365
65+ <i>Potentially eligible for traditional Medicaid and/or Medicare</i>	5,081
Total	289,804

Georgia % Uninsured by FPL (2023)		
Category	GA Uninsured Population	% of GA Uninsured Population
Potentially Medicaid Eligible		
Below 100% FPL	289,804	24%
Potentially Marketplace Eligible		
100% – 137% FPL	114,950	9%
138% – 399% FPL	601,137	49%
Above 399% FPL	217,870	18%
Total	1,223,761	100%

2019 Uninsured Population Data



United States Census Bureau's uninsured population data in Georgia in 2019.

Key takeaways:

- As of the 2019 Census data, there were an estimated **1,382,983 (13.4%) uninsured Georgians**, of which 345,336 (25%) were under 100% of the FPL
- In 2019, the largest group of uninsured Georgians below 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) was between the age of 19 – 64.

Georgia Uninsured by Age Below 100% FPL (2019)	
Under 19 <i>Potentially eligible for traditional Medicaid</i>	50,629
19 – 64 <i>Potentially eligible for traditional Medicaid or Pathways</i>	290,232
65+ <i>Potentially eligible for traditional Medicaid and/or Medicare</i>	4,475
Total	345,336

Georgia % Uninsured by FPL (2019)		
Category	GA Uninsured Population	% of GA Uninsured Population
Potentially Medicaid Eligible		
Below 100% FPL	345,336	25%
Potentially Marketplace Eligible		
100% – 137% FPL	158,124	12%
138% – 399% FPL	684,104	49%
Above 399% FPL	195,419	14%
Total	1,382,983	100%

2017 Uninsured Population Data



United States Census Bureau's uninsured population data in Georgia in 2017.

Key takeaways:

- As of the 2017 Census data, there were an estimated **1,471,840 (14.9%) uninsured Georgians**, of which 478,117 (32%) were under 100% of the FPL
- In 2017, the largest group of uninsured Georgians below 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) was between the age of 19 – 64.

Georgia Uninsured by Age Below 100% FPL (2017)	
Under 19 <i>Potentially eligible for traditional Medicaid</i>	66,117
19 – 64 <i>Potentially eligible for traditional Medicaid or Pathways</i>	408,381
65+ <i>Potentially eligible for traditional Medicaid and/or Medicare</i>	3,619
Total	478,117

Georgia % Uninsured by FPL (2017)		
Category	GA Uninsured Population	% of GA Uninsured Population
Potentially Medicaid Eligible		
Below 100% FPL	478,117	32%
Potentially Marketplace Eligible		
100% – 137% FPL	188,579	13%
138% – 399% FPL	649,984	44%
Above 399% FPL	155,160	11%
Total	1,471,840	100%

2024 Marketplace Population Data



Key takeaways:

- Of the 1.3 million Georgians receiving Marketplace coverage, 96% are receiving financial assistance.
- Consumers between 100% – 150% of the FPL are eligible for a \$0 premium silver plan on the Marketplace
- Consumers <100% FPL may still purchase a Marketplace plan, but are ineligible for premium subsidies

\$0 Premium Eligible

Marketplace Plan Selection by Income (2024) ¹		
Income (FPL)	Count	% of Total*
<100%	16,977	1%
100% – 138%	709,984	54%
138% – 150%	124,074	10%
>150% – 200%	195,566	15%
>200% – 250%	87,098	7%
>250% – 300%	50,904	4%
>300% – 400%	47,648	4%
>400% or unknown	72,863	4%
Total	1,305,114	100%

If the consumer earns ² :	Their expected premium contribution is:
100 - 150% of FPL	0% of income (i.e., the benchmark plan will have no premium)
150 – 200% of FPL	0 - 2% of income
200 – 250% of FPL	2 - 4% of income
250 - 300% of FPL	4 - 6% of income
300 - 400% of FPL	6 – 6.5% of income
400% of FPL or higher	8.5% of income

Source: (1) [CMS, 2024 Marketplace Open Enrollment Period Public Use Files \(as of March 22, 2024\)](#) (2) [ASPE 2023 Poverty Guidelines: 48 Contiguous States \(all states except Alaska and Hawaii\)](#)

Spreading the Word About Pathways through Influencers



Role of an Influencer





Community influencers serve as a trusted voice in their communities. Our hope is to work with influencers to reach uninsured Georgians in their communities to raise their awareness of Pathways and drive applications to this free health insurance.

Influencer Engagement

Our team is executing a marketing and outreach campaign that will run through January 2025 to reach uninsured Georgians, including members of your community.


We ask that influencers help us engage your community to raise awareness of, and drive applications to, Pathways through existing events, communications activities, and sharing toolkits of Pathways information with their communities.



Influencer Organizations	Interaction with Potential Members	Motivators
 HEALTH PROVIDERS & ASSOCIATIONS	Work to improve health outcomes and provide direct care	Pathways will reduce the number of uninsured or underinsured patients in Georgia
 QUALIFYING ACTIVITY PROVIDERS	Provide employment, education, or community service opportunities for Pathways-eligible Georgians	Pathways may be an incentive for individuals they work with to seek out employment, education, community service opportunities, etc.
 COMMUNITY GROUPS	Strengthen and build communities where potential members live	Pathways is another resource to support their communities in their journey to employment, education, professional development, and healthy futures
 GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	Offer programs and services to Georgians, many of whom are potentially eligible for Pathways	Pathways is a resource to improve health, education, and economic mobility to the individuals in the communities their organizational audiences serve


Georgia Pathways to Coverage™

- <https://pathways.georgia.gov/>
- One-pager overview
- Check out events


Together as One Health Fair
 December 13 • 11:00 a.m. • McDonough, GA


JuGueton
 December 14 • 11:00 a.m. • Fort Valley, GA


Christmas Festival
 December 14 • 5:00 p.m. • McDonough, GA


Goodwill Community Resource Connections
 December 16 • 10:00 a.m. • Valdosta, GA

GEORGIA PATHWAYS TO COVERAGE™
 TRANSITIONAL OPTIONS FOR PEDIATRIC PATIENTS AND THEIR PARENTS/CARETAKERS



PATIENTS TURNING 19

Patients enrolled in traditional Medicaid, including PeachCare for Kids®, may age out of their current coverage when he/she turns 19. At this point, he/she may become eligible for Medicaid coverage through Pathways if he/she is not eligible for another form of coverage.

Those who are 18-years-old aging out of their current coverage will receive a notice from the state 45 days before their coverage period ends. This notice will include information about continuing medical coverage, including information on Pathways.

An 18-year-old who is losing coverage and wants to apply to Pathways can apply on the first day of the month of their 19th birthday. For example, if an applicant's birthday is May 15, he/she can apply on May 1.

PREGNANT WOMEN

Pregnant women can be enrolled in Medicaid for Pregnant Women for up to 12 months after pregnancy. At the one-year mark, they will need to be reevaluated for Medicaid. They may be eligible for Pathways if they are not eligible for another form of Medicaid coverage.

Women who need Medicaid reevaluation will receive a notice from the state 45 days before their coverage period ends. This notice will include information about continuing medical coverage, including information on Pathways.

PARENTS/CARETAKERS OF CHILDREN ON MEDICAID

Pathways may be a coverage option for uninsured parents or caretakers of children under 19 enrolled in Medicaid. An uninsured parent or caretaker who may be eligible for Pathways can apply for coverage by reporting a change through the Gateway portal.

HOW TO APPLY

If an individual already has Medicaid coverage, he/she can renew benefits and will not need to start a new application to receive a new class of assistance, including Pathways.

The easiest way to renew benefits is online at gateway.ga.gov, but a member can also renew:

- In-person at a local Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) office. To find the location and business hours for a DFCS office, visit dfcs.ga.gov/locations
- By mail to their local DFCS office
- By phone at 1-877-423-4746 or 711 for those who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking

Uninsured parents or caretakers with children under 19 enrolled in Medicaid can apply for coverage by reporting a change in the Gateway portal, in person at their local DFCS office, by mail to their local DFCS office, or by phone at 1-877-423-4746 or 711 for those who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking.

WHAT IS PATHWAYS?

Georgia Pathways to Coverage™ is a program to help low-income Georgians qualify for Medicaid who otherwise would not be eligible for traditional Medicaid. Pathways is a free health insurance option for eligible individuals.

To be eligible for Pathways, a person must:

- Be a Georgia resident
- Be a U.S. citizen or legally residing non-citizen
- Have a household income of up to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
 - For example, in 2024, this equals:
 - \$15,060 per year or \$1,255 on average per month for one person
 - \$25,820 per year or \$2,151 on average per month for a family of three
- Be between 19 and 64 years of age
- Prove that he/she is completing at least 80 hours of qualifying activities per month
 - Please visit pathways.georgia.gov/qualifying-activities for more information
- Not qualify for any other type of Medicaid
- Not be incarcerated

There are several circumstances in which Georgians who are currently enrolled in traditional Medicaid or Georgians who are currently uninsured may become eligible for Pathways. Read more for common populations to which this may apply.

Pathways covers many of the same medical services as traditional Medicaid. Visit pathways.georgia.gov/about-pathways for a list of covered services.

Next Session



Rhonda Spellmeier, MBA, BSN, RN
HIE Workflow Specialist
KONZA National Network
rspellmeier@konza.org

SDOH Data Collection and Z Codes

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

10 - 11 a.m. ET

Workgroup Objective: Discussion of Z codes and how to overcome barriers.

If interested in sharing, please email Karen Holtz at karen.holtz@allianthealth.org.



Please forward the [registration](#) link to your health information management and coding professionals.

Improving the collection of [Social Determinants of Health \(SDOH\) data with ICD-10-CM Z Codes](#)

Alliant Health Resources

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Georgia State Office of Rural Health Flex Grant for Health Equity Improvement

[2024 Health Equity Improvement Project Playbook](#)

GA Flex Resources

Hospital Health Equity

[Strategic Planning Tool](#)

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

[Discharge Referral List](#)

[Improving the Collection of Social](#)

[Determinants of Health \(SDOH\) Data with ICD-10-CM Z Codes](#)

[Social Determinants of Health Setup and Support Guide](#)

[PRAPARE Social Determinants of Health in the EHR](#)

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Health Equity Improvement Project

[Georgia State Office of Rural Health \(SORH\)](#)

[Flex Grant: 2024 Health Equity Improvement Project Playbook](#)

2024 Presentations

GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project Meetings: December 2024

Thank you for registering for the the 2024-2025 GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project, and welcome back! Last year's efforts in developing your health equi...



[Register Here](#)

GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project Meetings: November 2024

Thank you for registering for the the 2024-2025 GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project, and welcome back! Last year's efforts in developing your health equi...



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GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project Meetings: October 2024

Thank you for registering for the the 2024-2025 GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project, and welcome back! Last year's efforts in developing your health equi...



[Materials](#)

GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project: October 2024-2025 Kickoff Meeting

This presentation supports the kickoff session for the 2024-2025 GA FLEX HEI project. During this session, we will discuss MBQIP standards for health equity, meetin...



[Materials](#)

GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project: August 2024 Close Out Session

The purpose of this session is to celebrate the ending of year 2 of the GA FLEX HE Improvement Project and share the final deliverable, which is a playbook of all of...



[Recording](#)

[Materials](#)

GA FLEX Health Equity Improvement Project: July 2024 Workgroup Session

The purpose of this session is to celebrate the ending of year 2 of the GA FLEX HE Improvement Project and share the final deliverable, which is a playbook of all of...



[Recording](#)

<https://quality.allianthealth.org/ga-flex/>

Resources

1. **FindHelp.org** - Provides information on local services, including transportation, by zip code. <https://www.findhelp.org/>
2. **Community Action Agencies Across America** - State-by-state network of community agencies that serve low-income and poor. Services may include help with emergency assistance, food and nutrition, adult basic education and employment, housing, money management, and transportation.
https://communityactionpartnership.com/?option=com_spreadsheets&view=search&spreadsheet=cap&Itemid=188
3. **Eldercare and Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)** - AAAs help adults with disabilities and older adults and their caregivers find support and local services, including local programs and agencies that provide transportation services. 1-800-677-1116
<https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx>



Polling Question 2

2. Are you using the paper CMS Abstraction and Reporting Tool (CART) tool?

☐ Yes

☐ No

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3

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- ☐ CMS News Releases (Medicare, Medicaid , Fact Sheets)
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- ☐ Long Term Services and Support
- ☐ Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign
- ☐ Burden Reduction News & Insights Newsletter
- ☐ Employer Partners
- ☒ **Health Equity Quarterly**
- ☐ Covering Indian Country

Additional Webinars



Advancing Digital Healthcare Equity: Navigating Disparities in the Digital Age

Tuesday, December 3, 2024, from 3 – 4:30 p.m. ET

Join AHRQ's National Webinar featuring an [expert panel of speakers](#) who will highlight recent federal efforts to advance health and digital healthcare equity. The discussion will explore some of the latest frameworks, data, and tools to inform and advance health and digital healthcare equity. CEUs available.

To Register:

<https://ahrqwebinar.webex.com/weblink/register/r8fb19181f98090c40f897fc9ea98f043>



Questions?

