

Unemployment Rates in Medicaid Expansion and Non-Expansion States, 2010-2017

5 Slide Series, Volume 69

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The Menges Group

Strategic Health Policy & Care Coordination Consulting

Introduction

- Our previous edition of the 5 Slide Series found that across the 31 states (+ DC) that had implemented Medicaid expansion as of 2017, enrollment of the traditional (non-expansion) Medicaid population decreased by 10% from January 2014 – September 2018. This decrease was exactly opposite the 10% increase in traditional Medicaid enrollment that occurred during this same timeframe across the 19 non-expansion states.

https://www.themengesgroup.com/presentation/medicaid_enrollment_progression_2014-2017_--_january_2019.pdf

- This edition of the 5 Slide Series assesses whether differences exist in overall economic performance that might help explain the above differences in Medicaid enrollment trends. We have presented the unemployment rate progression from 2010 to 2017 by state. Aggregate unemployment rates across Medicaid expansion and non-expansion states are also provided.

Unemployment Rate by State, 2010-2017 (Alabama – Kansas)

State	Adopted Medicaid Expansion as of December 2017 (Y/N)	Unemployment Rate 2010 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2014 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2017 (%)
Alabama	N	10.5	6.8	4.4
Alaska	Y	7.9	6.9	7.2
Arizona	Y	10.4	6.8	4.9
Arkansas	Y	8.2	6.1	3.7
California	Y	12.2	7.5	4.8
Colorado	Y	8.7	5.0	2.8
Connecticut	Y	9.1	6.6	4.7
Delaware	Y	8.4	5.7	4.6
District of Columbia	Y	9.4	7.8	6.1
Florida	N	11.1	6.3	4.2
Georgia	N	10.5	7.1	4.7
Hawaii	Y	6.9	4.4	2.4
Idaho	N	9.0	4.8	3.2
Illinois	Y	10.4	7.1	5.0
Indiana	Y	10.4	5.9	3.5
Iowa	Y	6.0	4.2	3.1
Kansas	N	7.1	4.6	3.6

Unemployment Rate by State, 2010-2017 (Kentucky – North Carolina)

State	Adopted Medicaid Expansion as of December 2017 (Y/N)	Unemployment Rate 2010 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2014 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2017 (%)
Kentucky	Y	10.2	6.5	4.9
Louisiana	Y	8.0	6.4	5.1
Maine	N	8.1	5.6	3.3
Maryland	Y	7.7	5.8	4.1
Massachusetts	Y	8.3	5.7	3.7
Michigan	Y	12.6	7.3	4.6
Minnesota	Y	7.4	4.2	3.5
Mississippi	N	10.4	7.6	5.1
Missouri	N	9.6	6.2	3.8
Montana	Y	7.3	4.7	4.0
Nebraska	N	4.6	3.3	2.9
Nevada	Y	13.5	7.9	5.0
New Hampshire	Y	5.8	4.3	2.7
New Jersey	Y	9.5	6.7	4.6
New Mexico	Y	8.1	6.7	6.2
New York	Y	8.6	6.3	4.7
North Carolina	N	10.9	6.3	4.6

Unemployment Rate by State, 2010-2017 (North Dakota – Wyoming)

State	Adopted Medicaid Expansion as of December 2017 (Y/N)	Unemployment Rate 2010 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2014 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2017 (%)
North Dakota	Y	3.8	2.7	2.6
Ohio	Y	10.3	5.8	5.0
Oklahoma	N	6.8	4.5	4.3
Oregon	Y	10.6	6.8	4.1
Pennsylvania	Y	8.5	5.9	4.9
Rhode Island	Y	11.2	7.7	4.5
South Carolina	N	11.2	6.4	4.3
South Dakota	N	5.0	3.4	3.3
Tennessee	N	9.7	6.5	3.7
Texas	N	8.1	5.1	4.3
Utah	N	7.8	3.8	3.2
Vermont	Y	6.1	4.0	3.0
Virginia	N	7.1	5.2	3.8
Washington	Y	10.0	6.1	4.8
West Virginia	Y	8.7	6.6	5.2
Wisconsin	N	8.7	5.4	3.3
Wyoming	N	6.4	4.1	4.2

Unemployment Rate Progression by Medicaid Expansion Status

	Unemployment Rate 2010	Unemployment Rate 2014	Unemployment Rate 2017
USA	6.92%	4.57%	3.32%
Expansion States	7.09%	4.79%	3.49%
Non-Expansion States	6.64%	4.21%	3.00%

- The nationwide unemployment rate dropped by roughly half between 2010 and 2017. 2010 was selected to represent a pre-Medicaid expansion base year; unemployment was still fairly high during that year as a result of the recession that extended from December 2007 through June 2009.
- Across the Medicaid expansion states, the unemployment rate has consistently been about 0.5% above the corresponding rate in non-expansion states.
- The unemployment rate dropped by a similar proportion across both expansion and non-expansion states from 2014 (when Medicaid expansion was first implemented) to 2017.

Key Observations

- In all 50 states, the unemployment rate dropped between 2010 and 2014. In 48 states (all states except Alaska and Wyoming), the unemployment rate dropped further between 2014 and 2017.
- Our comparison of unemployment trends in expansion and non-expansion states revealed no evidence of states' Medicaid expansion decisions affecting unemployment rates.
- Regarding the January 2019 5 Slide Series edition's finding that Medicaid enrollment increased by 10% from 2014-2018 in the non-expansion states, but decreased by 10% in expansion states (for non-expansion subgroups), this edition's findings suggest that these Medicaid enrollment differences cannot be attributed to poorer economic performance occurring in non-expansion states.

5 Slide Series Overview

Our 5 Slide Series is a monthly publication whereby we briefly discuss/address a selected topic outside the confines of our client engagements.

For this edition, we used published unemployment rates from the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Source: https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2011/ted_20110301_data.htm

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