



Expand KanCare for healthy kids and families

Healthy Kansas kids and families are critical to the future of Kansas. Their health depends on regular access to quality care, including wellness visits, screenings, vaccinations, mental health resources, and dental checkups.

A lack of health care, especially in childhood, leads to chronic conditions, shorter life expectancy, increased lifetime medical costs, and sicker families.

Most low-income Kansas kids are eligible for KanCare's Medicaid and CHIP programs. However, they may not all be signed up to receive that coverage. An increasing number of Kansas kids remain uninsured (an estimated 43,000 in 2019).

Expanding KanCare is critical to reversing this concerning trend.

Why? Studies show that when parents sign up for insurance programs, it is more likely they will enroll their kids as well.

Also, kids' health reflects the health and well-being of their parents. When parents are insured, kids are more likely to receive regular checkups and preventative care.

Yet with few exceptions, parents don't currently qualify for KanCare. Expanding KanCare provides another option for affordable health insurance for families.

Many employer-sponsored health insurance plans provide coverage for families. But what

about families without employer-sponsored insurance (including small businesses) or that can't afford insurance?

And what happens when families fall into the coverage gap – making too much to qualify for KanCare, yet not enough to purchase a plan on the insurance marketplace? Expanding KanCare offers a solution.

Healthier moms = healthier babies

A baby's health is also tied to a mom's health.

To reduce maternal and infant mortality, low birth weights, pre-term births, and post-birth complications, *as well as address stark racial disparities in maternal and infant health*, we must make sure moms-to-be have continued access to health care before, during, and after pregnancy.

Pregnant moms without health insurance (and whose family income is less than 171% of the federal poverty level) currently can only be covered by KanCare during pregnancy and then for 60 days after birth. In 2018, KanCare covered an estimated 39% of pregnancies.

Short-term coverage is not enough. Moms must have health insurance to access care long before their pregnancy begins and for at least a year postpartum. Expanding KanCare would improve coverage for most of these women as they create and nurture their families.

The health of moms and babies supports the health of our entire state.

A state full of healthy families will ensure communities thrive for years to come.