

ViiV Healthcare Supports Medicaid Expansion

Issue

Medicaid has played a critical role in HIV since the epidemic began, as the largest source of coverage for people with HIV.ⁱ Nationally, more than 42 percent of people with HIV who are engaged in medical care have incomes at or below the federal poverty level.ⁱⁱ The highest rates of HIV impact are among minority and LGBTQ populations, creating significant inequities. Medicaid is an essential source of access to medical care and antiretroviral drug coverage for treatment and prevention of HIV. Lack of health coverage is a major barrier to success in the fight to end HIV. Unfortunately, there are still states that have not yet adopted Medicaid expansion. Without Medicaid expansion, many individuals who could benefit from HIV treatment or prevention lack access to needed medicines, health care, and support services.

ViiV Healthcare Position

As the only pharmaceutical company with a singular focus on HIV treatment and prevention, ViiV Healthcare Company (ViiV) strongly supports policies that promote access to comprehensive health services for people with HIV and those who would benefit from HIV prevention. ViiV encourages states to expand Medicaid so that they can access federal funding that will facilitate provision of vital health coverage for individuals with a low-income.

Key Points

Without expanded Medicaid, only limited categories of people are eligible to access Medicaid services. States that have expanded their Medicaid programs extended Medicaid coverage for HIV treatment and prevention to over 18 million low-income Americans,ⁱⁱⁱ potentially averting HIV transmissions.

Medicaid Expansion Ensures Access to Medicines and Care for HIV Treatment

Prescription drugs are covered under Medicaid expansion as an Essential Health Benefit (EHB), along with medical care, lab services, and other essential benefits for effective management of HIV. People with HIV have benefited greatly from scientific innovations in HIV treatment, including multiple formulations that effectively suppress the virus, offer improved outcomes, fewer side-effects, and improve wellness and quality of life. Effective antiretroviral treatment allows HIV to be managed as a chronic condition and prevents sexual transmission of HIV to others.^{iv,v} Therefore, providing access to HIV treatment has a dual benefit of individual wellness and reducing new infections.^{vi} One averted infection can represent a lifetime cost savings of \$1,555,489.^{vii}

Medicaid Expansion Ensures Access to Medicines and Care for HIV Prevention

Scientific innovations have resulted in HIV prevention drugs that are up to 97 percent effective at preventing HIV transmission via sex and are available in multiple formulation options to meet patient needs. Medicaid expansion assures that medicines for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) are available, as it has a "Grade A" rating from the US Preventive Services Taskforce. Effective prevention with PrEP also requires access to medical care for monitoring and regular HIV testing, which are covered for Medicaid Expansion populations.

Conclusion

ViiV supports Medicaid Expansion as a key policy pathway to promote health equity, and ensure access to necessary medical care and drug coverage for low-income people living with HIV and persons in need of HIV prevention.

ⁱ Kaiser Family Foundation. [Medicaid and HIV](#). Accessed July 15, 2022.

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). [HIV Surveillance Special Report 21, 2019](#). Accessed July 15, 2022.

ⁱⁱⁱ Kaiser Family Foundation. [Medicaid Expansion Enrollment](#). Accessed July 15, 2022.

^{iv} National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. [HIV Undetectable=Untransmittable \(U=U\), or Treatment as Prevention](#). Accessed July 15, 2022.

^v CDC. [Effectiveness of Prevention Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Acquiring or Transmitting HIV](#). Accessed July 15, 2022.

^{vi} Li Z, et al. [MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2019;68:267-272](#).

^{vii} Cohen JP, et al. [Pharmacoecon Open. 2020 Dec;4\(4\):687-696](#).