

Twitter Chat Q&A: Centering Health Equity in Medicaid Section 1115 Demonstrations



Heather Howard

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Manatt Health's recent issue briefs produced for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's State Health and Value Strategies program highlight how states can address structural racism within the U.S. health system, which has caused disproportionate health risks and poorer health for people and communities of color. Patricia/Linda, what is Medicaid's role in promoting health equity?

A

Medicaid is a critical lever for advancing health equity because of its size, scale and demographics. States can advance health equity in Medicaid through coverage and benefit policy, delivery system and payment reform, and innovations that impact the social drivers of health.



Patricia Boozang

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Section 1115 demonstrations are a powerful tool to advance health equity. States can incorporate equity components in demonstration renewals; develop new, equity-focused demonstrations; and evaluate the impacts of existing demonstrations on health equity.



Linda Elam



Heather Howard

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These efforts require collaborative and sustained efforts across state agencies, local governments, communities and other stakeholders. How can these various entities prioritize and work together to center health equity through Section 1115 demonstrations?

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States can implement strategies that center and advance health equity at each stage of the Section 1115 demonstration life cycle, which includes planning and design, implementation and monitoring, and evaluation.



Linda Elam

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Partnership and communication with people who are directly impacted are essential to advance health equity. Meaningful community engagement requires investment of time and financial resources to build trusted relationships, transparency and bidirectional communication channels.



Patricia Boozang



Heather Howard

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And there are potential Section 1115 demonstration innovations that states can leverage to use Medicaid to address underlying inequities in health care. Patricia/Linda, can you give some examples of key considerations states should keep in mind?

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States can use Medicaid Section 1115 demonstrations to advance eligibility expansions and continuity of coverage innovations aimed at advancing health equity.



Linda Elam

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I agree and will add that states can also use Medicaid Section 1115 demonstrations to advance benefit enhancements, coverage affordability strategies and expenditure authority for pilot programs/delivery system reform to advance health equity.



Patricia Boozang



Heather Howard

Be sure to check out our complete issue briefs and companion webinar for more information about this important health equity topic here: <https://www.shvs.org/resource/centering-health-equity-in-medicaid-section-1115-demonstrations-2/>

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About Manatt Health

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About State Health and Value Strategies

State Health and Value Strategies (SHVS) assists states in their efforts to transform the health and health care by providing targeted technical assistance to state officials and agencies. The program is a grantee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, led by staff at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. The program connects states with experts and peers to undertake health care transformation initiatives. By engaging state officials, the program provides lessons learned, highlights successful strategies, and brings together states with experts in the field. Learn more at www.shvs.org.