



Medicaid Policy & Programs



ADVANCING DATA INSIGHTS FOR QUALITY, EQUITABLE CARE

Transforming Medicaid

Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provide critical support to some of the most vulnerable members of our society—children, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and older adults. The program also faces long-standing challenges that will require increased understanding and innovative approaches. Federal agencies and state Medicaid directors say that acquiring needed funding is only the beginning of the issues they see as top priorities for their programs, from addressing the rise in opioid and substance use disorders to meeting unaddressed mental health needs and improving health equity. State Medicaid directors say they need evidence and robust data analytics to help inform policy recommendations in real-time. Abt is at the forefront of this work, helping partners and clients address short-term challenges holistically, with long-term change in mind.

Expertise

RESEARCH, MONITORING, & EVALUATION

- Randomized experiments
- Quasi-experimental designs
- Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & IMPLEMENTATION

- Program implementation support (including quality measurement)
- Public reporting support
- Provider training
- Federal rulemaking support
- Technical assistance

TECHNOLOGY & DATA ANALYTICS

- Integrated data collection platforms
- Amazon Web Services (AWS) Public Safety & Disaster
- Response Competency status
- Secure, full-featured analytic cloud computing
- Machine learning & artificial intelligence
- Mature information risk management program
- Authorizations to operate with 11 federal agencies

Selected Work

Strategic Medicaid & CHIP Managed Care Monitoring, Oversight, and Technical Assistance

Client: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

Abt serves as a strategic partner for CMS to help ensure state Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) managed care programs are compliant with federal rules, and provide access to high-quality health services for beneficiaries. As part of this work, Abt is identifying policy gaps, developing strategic frameworks, and providing tools and training modules that consider and incorporate the needs of a diverse set of stakeholders to address the breadth and scope of managed care program.

Medicaid Innovator Accelerator Program (IAP) Evaluation

Client: CMS

The Medicaid IAP supported state Medicaid agencies through technical assistance and capacity building to meet the needs of Medicaid beneficiaries with complex health needs—such as comorbid physical and mental health conditions—and those needing community-based, long-term services and supports. Abt conducted a rapid-cycle qualitative evaluation of the participating states' experiences with the technical assistance and capacity building in IAP via interviews, focus groups, and observations of group learning activities.

Evaluation of the Maternal Opioid Misuse Model (MOM)

Client: CMS

CMS's MOM initiative uses a coordinated care model to address the need for improved care for pregnant women enrolled in Medicaid who use opioids. Abt and partners are evaluating the model's ability to improve quality and health outcomes while cutting costs; improve access to treatment, service delivery capacity, and infrastructure; and create sustainable coverage and payment mechanisms.

Evaluating CMS's InCK Model for Kids with Complex Health Needs

Client: CMS

The Integrated Care for Kids (InCK) payment and delivery model was designed to better integrate service delivery across behavioral health, physical health, and other health-related services for children with the goal of reducing Medicaid expenditures and improving outcomes. Abt is leading a mixed methods evaluation design to evaluate the model and will also execute a quasi-experimental design to assess its impacts on children within and across participating communities. The results will address whether early identification, service integration, and alternative payment models improve the well-being of children and their families.

Tracking Minnesotans' Access and Use of Home and Community-based Health Services

Client: Minnesota Department of Human Services

States can offer Medicaid beneficiaries the option to receive home and community based services (HCBS) in place of institutional long-term care. To support monitoring access to these services in Minnesota, Abt developed, tested, and validated indicators using state datasets—including Medicaid, assessment, and other service data—to track access over time, and identify and examine trends. Using Abt's digital dashboard, agency staff will be able to monitor service use, assess the impact of policy changes, and address gaps.

Managing Technical Assistance Support for Massachusetts' Medicaid ACOs

Client: Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MassHealth, the state Medicaid program, serves more than 1.8 million low- and moderate-income individuals and families and aims to provide access to high-quality, integrated health care. Under its Medicaid Section 1115 Waiver, MassHealth's payment reform initiatives included investments in accountable care organizations, community partners, and community service agencies. Abt served as the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services' TA managing vendor, assisting with development and management of the technical assistance program.

Managing Opioid Use in Older Adults

Client: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

Older adults are twice as likely as the general population to have pain, and clinicians often rely on opioid treatment. Abt and our partner, Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute, are working with AHRQ to test strategies for managing pain and opioid use in older adults in primary care settings. The Abt team is conducting an environmental scan, collecting public input and interviewing exemplary practices to identify innovations, as well as conducting a

national survey of providers who treat older adults. The team will produce a publicly available compendium of strategies consisting of tools and resources to assist providers with the safe management of pain among older adults.

Supporting California's Transformation of Medi-CAL

Client: California Department of Health Care Services

Abt is an approved provider of six off-the-shelf services and hands-on technical assistance under the DHCS Providing Access and Transforming Health (PATH) Technical Assistance (TA) Marketplace. Our experts help address challenges in health and human services with an equity lens across key domains.

Assessing HUD's IWISH Model for Aging in Place

Client: HUD

Abt is evaluating a HUD demonstration of the Integrated Wellness in Supportive Housing (IWISH) model, which is designed to help elderly adults in HUD-assisted multifamily housing age in place. New staff at IWISH sites—full-time Resident Wellness Directors and part-time Wellness Nurses—follow a person-centered approach to engaging residents in activities designed to address the use of potentially unnecessary medical services, delay transitions to nursing homes, and reduce housing turnover. Using administrative data matching, interviews, site visits, and focus groups, Abt compared outcomes at 124 sites (40 treatment sites and 84 control sites) across seven states in order to evaluate how successfully treatment sites have implemented the IWISH model. Results are forthcoming.

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