



People with disabilities depend on Medicaid every day for their health, safety, and independence. Medicaid is our communities' lifeline. Below are 9 fast facts and figures explaining how Medicaid helps people with disabilities.

1. Medicaid covers [17 million older adults and people with disabilities](#).
2. Over [7.8 million people](#) with disabilities rely on Medicaid-funded Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), such as home health care and personal care, and habilitation services. Another approximately [1.5 million](#), including 6 in 10 nursing facility residents, rely on Medicaid for institutional long term services and supports (LTSS).
3. Medicaid is often the [only insurance that can meet disabled individual's needs](#). This is because it covers many services for people with disabilities that are not covered by private insurance or Medicare. For example, Medicare and private insurance generally do not cover LTSS such as long-term stays in nursing homes, extended personal care services at home, most intensive community-based mental health services, or habilitation services for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
4. HCBS are "[optional services](#)" that states *may* provide through Medicaid, but do not have to. This means that if states face budget crunches, these services will be among the first cut.
5. A large portion of Medicaid spending is for LTSS. While only 6% of Medicaid enrollees use LTSS, [those enrollees made up 37% of Medicaid expenditures](#). If states face budget crunches, states may look to LTSS to make cuts.
6. Medicaid is the [single largest payer](#) of behavioral health services, providing access to intensive mental health and substance use disorder services not often covered by private insurance. Like HCBS, most behavioral health services are also [optional services](#), and thus vulnerable to cuts if federal funding is decreased.

7. Medicaid is a lifeline for children with disabilities. Because of Medicaid's comprehensive [Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment \(EPSDT\) benefit](#) for children and youth under age 21, most children and youth can receive services in their own homes, with their families. Medicaid covers [nearly half of all children with special health care needs](#).
8. Medicaid protects low-income people with Medicare from poverty by reducing Medicare out of pocket costs, providing LTSS, and covering benefits that Medicare does not, such as non-emergency medical transportation, and in many states dental, vision, and hearing.
9. Medicaid expansion helps people with disabilities. Reasonable estimates suggest that between [a fifth to a third of Medicaid expansion enrollees have a disability](#). Others are caregivers of people with disabilities, both paid and unpaid. Individuals with disabilities may be in the expansion group for a number of reasons, including those who are eligible for Social Security but are in the two-year Medicare waiting period.
10. Medicaid expansion helps the approximately [700,000](#) disabled people and older adults who are on waiting lists for home and community based services, because individuals who would not otherwise be eligible for Medicaid without a waiver slot can receive services while waiting. There is [no evidence](#) that states that have expanded Medicaid have longer waiting lists.

About us:

The [Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities](#) is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. Since 1973, CCD has advocated on behalf of people of all ages with physical and mental disabilities and their families. For more information, please contact [Jennifer Lav](#) at [lav@healthlaw.org](mailto:lav@healthlaw.org) or Gelila Selassie at [gselassie@justiceinaging.org](mailto:gselassie@justiceinaging.org).