



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

303 E 17th Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

November 1, 2023

The Honorable Rachel Zenzinger, Chair
Joint Budget Committee
200 East 14th Avenue, Third Floor
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Senator Zenzinger:

Enclosed please find the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing's response to the Joint Budget Committee's Request for Information #5 regarding the administration of the Children's Basic Health Plan, known in Colorado as the Child Health Plan Plus+ (CHP+). This LRFI request states:

Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, Indigent Care Program, Children's Basic Health Plan Medical and Dental Costs -- The Department is requested to submit a report by November 1, 2023, detailing the progress on all outstanding issues with administration of the Children's Basic Health Plan. The report should include a progress report on completing backlogged issues since the authorized additional FTE and a projection of when each backlogged issue will be completed and program authorities will become current and compliant. Finally, the report should include a recommendation on whether the administrative staffing level for the Children's Basic Health Plan is sufficient to maintain effective operation and performance into the future.

If you require further information or have additional questions, please contact the Department's Legislative Liaison, Jo Donlin, at Jo.Donlin@state.co.us or 720-610-7795.

Sincerely,

Kim Bimestefer
Executive Director



KB/maq

Enclosure: Health Care Policy and Financing FY 2022-23 LRFI #5 Children's Basic Health Plan

CC: Representative Shannon Bird, Vice-chair, Joint Budget Committee
Representative Rod Bockenfeld, Joint Budget Committee
Senator Jeff Bridges, Joint Budget Committee
Senator Barbara Kirkmeyer, Joint Budget Committee
Representative Emily Sirota, Joint Budget Committee
Craig Harper, Staff Director, JBC
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Legislative Council Library
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Jo Donlin, Legislative Liaison, HCPF

JBC LRFI HCPF #5 Children's Basic Health Plan (CHP+) Administration

FY2022-23

November 1, 2023

Submitted to: The Joint Budget Committee

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I. Executive Summary

This report is presented to the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) of the Colorado General Assembly in response to Legislative Request for Information #5. The previous LRFI for the CHP+ program (LRFI 3, 2023) provided a progress report on outstanding issues addressed with additional FTE. This legislative request for information report provides an update on the following:

A. Progress Report on Outstanding Issues

The previous LRFI outlined ten projects critical to program oversight, compliance and performance that also had barriers to completion. As a result of a well-staffed team and increased Department collaboration, eight out of ten projects are complete—many ahead of schedule, and two larger, related efforts will be complete by June 30, 2024. A description of each project reflected below in the first column by the letters “a, b, c” and so on, is available in the chart that begins on the bottom of the next page.

	Previous LRFI Status	Current Status
a	Dependent on Unwind	Resolved
b	Estimated Completion December 31, 2023	Resolved
c	Resolved	Resolved
d	Estimated Completion December 31, 2023	Resolved
e	Estimated Completion December 31, 2023	Complete June 30, 2024
f	Resolved	Resolved
g	Estimated Completion June 30, 2023	Resolved
h	Estimated Completion June 30, 2023	Resolved
i	Estimated Completion December 31, 2023	Resolved
j	Estimated Completion June 30, 2024	Complete June 30, 2024

B. CHP+ Staffing

The progress on the backlogged projects illustrates that the increased administrative staffing has been sufficient to advance program goals. Currently, CHP+ has 5 FTE, with no additional staffing needs.

C. Looking Forward

A summary of additional program efforts currently ongoing that were made possible due to the increased investment in CHP+ is provided.

II. Background Information

This report is presented to the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) of the Colorado General Assembly in response to Legislative Request for Information #5. The previous LRFI for the CHP+ program (LRFI 3, 2022) provided a progress report on outstanding issues addressed with additional FTE, and this report illustrates the Department’s continued progress—accomplished with a well-staffed CHP+ team and Department leadership support.

In 2020, the CHP+ program had two full time FTE managing a program that served over 77,0000 Coloradans with an annual expenditure of approximately \$188 million. As a result of this understaffing, the program was out of compliance, struggled with systems alignment and was not able to execute on performance driving initiatives. Investments by the state increasing the HCPF CHP+ team to 5 FTE, CHP+ prioritization by Department leadership, and cross-Department collaboration to leverage existing resources have all contributed to achieving CHP+ program shared goals. This collaborative focus is enabling the completion of compliance and systems projects while strategically driving more consistency across CHP+ Managed Care Organization partners and overall CHP+ program performance to improve the health and wellbeing of Colorado families enrolled in the CHP+ program.

III. Program Update

This update on outstanding projects CHP+ provides an overview of the progress made in the past year on outstanding issues.

A. Progress Report on Outstanding Issues

All outstanding projects reported in LRFI #3 (2022) are resolved or being addressed within the fiscal year. Below is the same table outline from LRFI #3, with status updates for each backloged CHP+ project. Please note, the only outstanding project for completion includes the benefit package redesign and updated fee schedule, which will be finalized per vendor contract by June 30, 2024 (Items e and j).

Table 1 - Progress Report on Outstanding Issues		
LRFI 3 Identified Issues	Status	Outcomes
a) Five Systems policy projects to correct enrollment and eligibility artifacts, which each individually drive adverse member experiences and inaccurate payments.	Resolved	Critical eligibility systems have been corrected to improve member experience by reducing churn resulting from system errors, eligibility and enrollment mismatch and retroactive disenrollment.
b) Nine Systems policy projects to correct varied policy inaccuracies within our	Resolved	The state is protected from audits and system change errors to ensure

MMIS; seven of which are directly related to implementing corrective measures/payment protections to prevent inaccurate payments.		member continuity of care and correct provider billing.
c) Routine quarterly reconciliation processes went unaddressed and unmanaged due to insufficient staffing. Attempts to restart this work has been slow to implement, taking the past year.	Resolved	The quarterly reconciliation is routinely conducted by the managed care rates team.
d) Recoupment of inaccurate payments made to healthcare providers in 2017-2019 has yet to be resolved.	Resolved	Further investigation, made possible with additional program investment, determined that the transition of payment structures for newly enrolled members in 2021 reconciled inaccurate payments.
e) Proper and complete determination of the CHP+ benefit at the individual code level to allow for the development of an accurate fee schedule.	In Progress Completion 6/30/2024	<i>Projects (e) and (j) are being resolved under the same vendor contract.</i> The Department has partnered with a vendor to complete a CHP+ Operations Manual & Fee Schedule that will improve navigation of CHP+ benefits for members and improves community transparency on CHP+ program services.
f) SPA-18-0027: MHPAEA Compliance: Yet to be resolved with CMS since placed on RAI 08/03/2018.	Resolved	The CHP+ Program is now in compliance with Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA), which ensures parity between behavioral health benefits and medical/surgical benefits for our CHP+ HMOs. After prolonged negotiation with CMS, this State Plan Amendment was approved by CMS on 8/9/2022.
g) SPA-20-0032: SUPPORT Act— Yet to be resolved with CMS since placed on RAI 08/06/2020.	Resolved	Compliance with the Substance Use Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities



		(SUPPORT) Act requires child health and pregnancy related assistance to include coverage of services necessary to prevent, diagnose, and treat a broad range of behavioral health symptoms and disorders and deliver in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. This State Plan Amendment for CHP+ was approved by CMS on 9/13/2023.
h) Rates/Payment Statutory Violation related to Specialty Drugs from May 2021 has yet to be resolved.	Resolved	This Department worked with impacted MCOs to determine an arrangement for payment. The team is continuing discussion with MCOs on reporting of data to document the statutory violation.
i) CCR Update for the CHP+ has yet to be finished with work spanning over the past 1.5 years on this effort. This is a compliance requirement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correction of inconsistencies and inaccuracies of the programs FPL premium and copayment policy between multiple authorities—CHIP State Plan, CCR, and Managed Care Contracts—has been unresolved since 2020. • Example: The language still recognizes and references “food stamps”. 	Resolved	The CCR has been updated and approved by the Medical Services Board CHP 23-05-09-A (adopted by consent 9/8/2023). This rule change puts us in compliance with FPL and updated terminology to be accurate and member friendly.
j) Detailed update of the CHP+ package to incorporate medical practice, coding, and diagnostic classification changes over the past decade remains ongoing. After 1.5 years of resource investment work remains related to compliance and appropriate rate setting for	In Progress Completion 6/30/2024	<i>Projects (e) and (j) are being resolved under the same vendor contract.</i> The Department has partnered with a vendor to complete a CHP+ Operations Manual & Fee Schedule that will improve navigation of CHP+ benefits for members and



all Managed Care Organizations. As an example, the CHP+ program still uses the DSM-IV for classification of BH/SUD benefits, (ex. recognizes autism, but not autism spectrum disorders).		improves community transparency on CHP+ program services.
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IV. CHP+ Staffing Update

A. Narrative

After the separation of the previous CHP+ program manager summer 2023, CHP+ is being led by an interim manager. This staff member has been the CHP+ unit supervisor and a member of the team since 2020. Additionally, a vacant compliance position is in the process of being backfilled with an offer made in October 2023. When fully staffed, the team will have five FTE, which is sufficient to manage the CHP+ program.

CHP+ is part of the newly formed Child and Family Health Division in the Health Policy Office. In recent months, CHP+ has worked to be an inclusive team with strength-based principles. The team participates in EDIA activities, community volunteering, and team learning. This connects the team to the communities they serve.

B. FTE Summary

With investments made by the state and the Department, the CHP+ staffing is as follows:

FTE	Title	Class
1.0	Program Manager [Vacant]	Program Manager II
1.0	Unit Supervisor [Acting Manager]	Program Manager I
1.0	Program Administrator	Program Administrator III
1.0	Quality Assurance & Program Integrity Specialist	Program Administrator III
1.0	Compliance Specialist [Offer made Oct 2023]	Program Administrator III
1.0	1289 Lookalike Program Manager	Program Manager I

V. Looking Forward

Besides efforts focused on completing the above priorities, the team has coordinated PHE unwind activities, increased alignment with Medicaid and Division of Insurance and identified opportunities to improve access to care for CHP+ members. Modernization will also continue through a focus on quality outcomes, including pediatrics and maternity.

Current CHP+ projects that will increase federal compliance, improve access to care for CHP+ eligible members, and effectively implement with a cost containment lens include:

- Adding gender-affirming care to the CHP+ benefit package in alignment with the Health First Colorado updated coverage and the Governor's goal to protect access to this health care;
- Partnering with Health First Colorado to implement the Consolidation and Appropriations Act, passed in 2023, requiring Medicaid and CHIP programs to have a plan in place to provide screening and services to juvenile members exiting incarceration;
- Implementing coverage of the new FDA-approved RSV vaccine by partnering with finance to secure funding and communicating with MCOs to effectively implement;
- Driving work on HB22-1289, Cover All Coloradans, by leveraging CHP+ authorities to deliver services to Coloradans without documentation who are pregnant, postpartum and children;
- Implementing the Department's Health Equity Plan submitted in June of 2023.

As a result of the support of the Governor's Office, the JBC, and Department leadership, the CHP+ program is set up for success for the coming years.