



Fact Sheet: Apple Health for Kids' Winning Strategies

December 21, 2012

Apple Health for Kids — Washington State's children's health insurance program — has won a \$12 million performance bonus from the Obama Administration for its efforts to enroll children in health insurance and help them retain coverage. Washington, a longtime leader in health coverage for children, is one of 23 states to be awarded a bonus this year. Since 2009, Apple Health for Kids has brought the state nearly \$60 million in flexible federal bonus funding.

How did Washington earn this award?

Washington qualified for the award by enrolling more of the lowest-income children in Apple Health for Kids. Our state employs the following strategies to make sure eligible children get and keep their health coverage:

- **Offering 12-month continuous coverage:** Upon enrollment, children are covered for the following 12-month period in the same way that many job-based insurance plans work. This helps kids get consistent care because they stay on the same plan for a year and it reduces the state's administrative costs.
- **No cumbersome asset test:** This limits the paperwork burden on both families and the state.
- **Allowing families to apply in ways that are convenient for them:** online, telephone, or by mail. This puts coverage within reach of parents who have a difficult time leaving work or finding childcare simply to enroll or renew their child's coverage.
- **Using the same application and renewal forms for all kids.** Because Washington combines federal Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage into Apple Health for Kids, Washington greatly improves efficiency by using the same forms for kids at all income levels. This not only saves the state resources, it makes it easier for families to maintain their coverage over time.
- **Helping to offset the cost of high health care premiums:** When a family has the opportunity to get health coverage through a job but cannot afford the cost, they may be able to receive premium assistance. This ensures that more children are able to get health coverage.