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US Diabetes Hospital Admissions, Breast Cancer Screening Rates Worsened In Last Year, Medicaid Scorecard Says

But administration's approach has improved blood pressure testing, dental care delivery rates

by Sue Darcey

While the US CMS showed improvements in delivery of some basic Medicaid and CHIP services from 2019 to 2020, other measures of care have worsened.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is getting better at delivering blood pressure screening and providing dental care to lower-income beneficiaries, but diabetes hospital admission rates have gotten worse over the past year, according to a CMS Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program 2020 scorecard.

In addition, the [2020 scorecard](#) shows that approximately 1% fewer women with Medicaid coverage received breast cancer screening this year, down from the 54.6% who received screening in 2019, according to the [2019 scorecard](#).

The annual scorecards highlight certain aspects of the state and federal performance of the Medicaid and CHIP programs, which collectively account for approximately \$600bn in annual spending and serve more than 74 million Americans. Experts say some failures of the program indicate states and the federal government could use help from private companies to make low-income beneficiaries more aware of the health care services they are entitled to receive through Medicaid and CHIP programs.

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The CMS touted some care-markers for children's health in its 30 October [announcement](#) of the 2020 scorecard, such as an approximate 5% increase in immunizations received by adolescents in the Medicaid and CHIP programs over the last two years, as well as an almost 5% increase (from 60.2% to 65.1%) rise in adolescent well-care visits.

However, states failed to make much improvement in measures including emergency department utilization rates for children and adolescents and the percentages of children ages 3 to 6 who had at least one well-child visit with a primary care provider, the agency stated.

"We have made giving states more flexibility to provide high quality care for our most vulnerable citizens ... a priority, but we also recognize that with greater autonomy must come greater accountability," said CMS administrator Seema Verma in announcing the Medicaid and CHIP scorecards.