

Methodology

Data Source

To estimate the number of individuals who could benefit in both states that have expanded Medicaid and those that have not yet made that choice, Families USA used the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) database. This data base is derived from the American Community Survey. The American Community Survey is an ongoing public survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. It is designed to give communities the current information that they need to plan and invest. Both national and state data is available. Among the data collected is information on respondents' household income, age, health insurance status, citizenship status, work status, and occupation. Families USA used data for 2008-2012. Using a 5-year sample provides a more accurate picture of the population than a one-year or three-year sample.

More information about the American Community Survey is available at https://www.census.gov/acs/www/about_the_survey/american_community_survey/.

To identify the population that could benefit from the Medicaid expansion in a given state, Families USA sorted the sample to capture responses of individuals with a household income below 138 percent of poverty, who were between ages 18 and 64, and who were uninsured. Sorting based on these criteria excludes individuals who are currently covered by the state's Medicaid program, and those who already had insurance, either through an employer or other payer. It gave us a sample that represents the population that will benefit the most from a Medicaid expansion.

Assumptions

For most states, our analysis does not take into consideration the citizenship status or immigration history, in part, because there are doubts about the accuracy of the PUMS data set in capturing this information. Additionally, in 43 states and the District of Columbia, qualified legal immigrants can receive Medicaid coverage after 5-years of residency; excluding non-citizens would undercount results. In those states, results may include some individuals who cannot benefit from Medicaid expansion. Seven states do not allow qualified legal immigrants to receive Medicaid. In those states, all non-citizens were excluded from results. Those states are Alabama, Mississippi, North Dakota, Ohio, Texas, Virginia and Wyoming.

Finally, our analysis uses a weighting factor to convert analysis from responses into population-level statistics. These population-level weights were provided by the PUMS data set. We did not make any additional adjustments to the data.