



# Contact Centers are the Hub for Medicaid Expansion

## Four tips to make this work for you

Medicaid eligibility has expanded in many states under the Affordable Care Act and as a result, more people than ever now qualify for this coverage. According to the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services](#), in October more than 1.46 million people were deemed eligible to enroll in either Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program. In states that are expanding Medicaid under the ACA, applications jumped 15.5 percent, and 757,991 new eligibility determinations were made. With this major expansion of the program, the [National Journal](#) has even called Medicaid an "Obamacare success story."

As healthcare insurance plan providers and state exchanges experience this increase in Medicaid enrollment, contact centers are playing a key role in the process. In order to properly handle the influx of applications and questions regarding eligibility and enrollment, plans must have a strong contact center partner in place with the following capabilities:

- 1. Scalability:** The ability to quickly scale up or down based on call volume is important for any contact center and it is extremely critical to health plans as Medicaid enrollment is on the rise. A contact center that can quickly adjust the number of agents to meet demand will ensure that any surge in enrollment is efficiently handled and member service needs are met.
- 2. Experienced Agents:** Call center agents serve as the primary touch point for many Americans who are enrolling in healthcare for the first time. Agents should demonstrate superior interpersonal skills and in-depth knowledge of Medicaid eligibility and plan coverage details.
- 3. Healthcare Expertise:** Providing contact center service in the healthcare space requires a partner that fully understands the industry's regulations and has a strong record of compliance with no citations. In addition, contact centers with previous experience handling the intricacies of managed care programs like Medicare Part D will be well prepared to handle the surge in Medicaid-eligible enrollment calls.
- 4. Technology:** Finding accurate information about Medicaid beneficiaries is always a challenge for health plans. Contact center providers need to be equipped with consumer database resources and tools to find more transient plan members. This gives them the ability to re-engage members to perform health assessments, update information, schedule services, etc.

The importance of having strong contact center assets in place ahead of the inevitable enrollment bustle in early 2014 cannot be overstated. If Medicaid enrollment keeps up its breakneck pace, and large numbers of exchange applicants continue to find they qualify for Medicaid, the time to prepare and get the necessary assets in place is now.