

Funding Opportunity: Research on Effects of COVID-19-Related Medicaid Changes

OVERVIEW

On April 19th, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) released a Call for Proposals (CFP) to fund research studies that evaluate or predict how enrollees are affected by Medicaid policy changes enacted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, RWJF seeks proposals that examine the impact of Medicaid policies on communities or color and/or explore how current or proposed policies may alleviate or exacerbate racial inequity and structural racism in the context of Medicaid.

RWJF anticipates awarding up to \$1.75 million in total funding to approximately 5-10 projects through this opportunity. Any qualified entity may apply, although preference will be given to not-for-profit and public entities. RWJF will also prioritize projects that are led by or meaningfully involve Medicaid enrollees, community-based organizations (CBOs), or others who are directly impacted, and projects that will be able to make early or full findings available during the grant period and disseminate them effectively to policymakers and other stakeholders.

Additional information, including a link to the full CFP and an FAQ document, is available [here](#). Applications are due on June 28th.

FUNDING

Each awarded project will receive grants between \$150,000 and \$350,000. Projects will last between 12 and 36 months. RWJF expects to fund a diverse range of studies with varying budgets and timelines.

Funding may be used for:

- Project staff salaries;
- Consultant fees;
- Data collection and analysis;
- Meetings;
- Supplies;
- Project-related travel; and
- Other direct project expenses, including a limited amount of equipment and indirect costs.

Grant funds may not be used to support clinical trials, to construct or renovate facilities, for lobbying/political activities, or as a substitute for funds currently being used to support similar activities.

Contracts will begin on May 1, 2022.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants must be based in the United States or its territories. Preference will be given to applicants that are either public entities or not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organizations. RWJF encourages applicants with project directors or team members from backgrounds historically underrepresented in research disciplines as a result of their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, or other factors.

Projects may be generated from disciplines including:

- Health services research;
- Economics;
- Sociology;
- Program evaluation;
- Political science;
- Public policy;
- Public health;
- Public administration;
- Law; or
- Business administration.

Examples of Medicaid policies and questions of interest under this CFP include, but are not limited to:

- What are the impacts of various Medicaid and CHIP provisions in the federal American Rescue Plan Act?
- How has continuous coverage for Medicaid enrollees under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act affected coverage for various enrollee populations?
- What are the impacts of data collection and data equity efforts in Medicaid (e.g., disaggregating data by race and ethnicity) on racial equity?
- What has been the impact of efforts by some states to simplify and streamline aspects of Medicaid eligibility and enrollment processes during the pandemic?

Applicants should carefully consider the timeliness of the study topic and research question(s) to ensure the issues being addressed will remain relevant at the time findings are released.

APPLICATION

Proposals will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Importance and policy relevance of the question to be addressed and potential to contribute significant new information to drive policy.
- Potential of the study to generate evidence that helps address racial inequities and structural racism in the context of Medicaid, including the impact of policies on communities of color.
- Meaningful involvement of Medicaid enrollees, community organizations, advocates who work with Medicaid enrollees, or other impacted stakeholders in the project.
- Strength of proposed methodology, including use of empirical methods.
- Appropriateness and availability of proposed data sources.
- Qualifications and expertise of the applicant.
- Ability to create timely deliverables for wide dissemination (e.g., issue briefs, webinars, blog posts, infographics, social media outreach), including products based on preliminary findings and throughout the life of the grant, in addition to papers suitable for peer-reviewed publication.
- Appropriateness of the timeline and budget.

Timeline

Brief proposals (four pages max) must be submitted by June 28th. Applicants will be notified if they have been invited to submit a full proposal on September 13th. Full proposals will be due on November 1st. Final awards will be announced on March 4, 2022.

A recording of an applicant informational webinar is available [here](#). Questions may be submitted to transformhealth@rwjf.org.