

Wyoming Department of Health, ARRA Impact – Qualified Individuals

Medicaid is a federal-state program providing medical assistance for specified groups of low-income persons who are aged, blind, disabled, or members of families with children. Within federal guidelines, each state designs and administers its own program. Federal partners for Medicaid are Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS).

Medicare Savings Programs cover individuals who are income eligible under 100% of the Federal Poverty Level. Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries' (QI) benefits include payment of Medicare premiums, deductibles and cost sharing. Certain low-income individuals who are aged or have disabilities as defined under the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program and who are eligible for Medicare are also eligible to have their Medicare Part B premiums paid for by Medicaid under the Medicare Savings Program. Eligible groups include Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries, (QMB) Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiaries (SLMB). The program was slated to terminate December 2009. In general, Medicaid payments are shared between federal and state governments according to a matching formula. Unlike the QMB and SLMB programs, the QI program is paid 100% by the federal government from the Part B Trust fund. The total amount of federal QI spending is limited each year and allocated among the states. States are required to cover only the number of people that would bring their annual spending on these population groups to their allocation levels. For the period beginning on January 1, 2009 and ending on September 30, 2009, the total allocation amount for all states was \$350 million. For the period that begins on October 1, 2009 and ends on December 31, 2009, the total allocation is \$150 million

The ARRA provision extends the QI program an additional year from December 2009 to December 2010. It establishes specific funding limits:

- from January 1, 2010, through September 30, 2010, the total allocation amount would be \$412.5 million, and
- October 1, 2010, through December 31, 2010, the total allocation amount would be \$150 million.

Impact on Wyoming Medicaid: We currently budget for this program on an ongoing basis as it has always been extended regardless of the sunset dates. The provision in the ARRA will extend this program through December 31, 2010, allowing Wyoming Medicaid to continue paying a portion of the Medicare cost for qualified recipients. Wyoming currently has 470 recipients in this program.