

Office of Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight

**State Planning and Establishment Grants for the
Affordable Care Act's Exchanges**

Quarterly Project Reports

Date: December 31, 2013

State: North Dakota

Project Title: North Dakota Exchange Grant FINAL REPORT

Project Quarter Reporting Period:
Quarter 4 (10/01/2013-12/31/2013)

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Project Summary

North Dakota received the confirmation of Transfer of Grantee from the N.D. Department of Insurance to the N.D. Department of Human Services (NDDHS) on December 17, 2012.

Department of Human Services planning activities focused on two areas: 1) analysis of technical integration requirements and system components needed to interact with the Federally Facilitated Marketplace (FFM) inclusive of a North Dakota consumer portal, and 2) change management planning including an assessment of stakeholder impacts resulting in an outreach and education plan, a training plan, and recommendations.

On Nov. 12, 2013, DHS Executive Director Maggie Anderson provided an update to the N.D. Legislature's Health Care Reform Review Committee on the status of the implementation of Medicaid expansion under the ACA, and the status of the development and implementation of the department's eligibility determination system. Meeting minutes are online at

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<http://www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/63-2013/interim/15-5041-03000-meeting-minutes.pdf?20131230132633>.

All planning activities in the two areas identified in the scope of the grant work were completed prior to this quarter. In addition a document containing change management recommendations was completed earlier by the change management vendor.

During the final quarter of the grant, North Dakota signed a contract amendment with its change-management vendor to assist with state-wide stakeholder training outlined in the training plan. This was able to be accomplished within budget, but did require the extension of the contract period to December 31, 2013. This action was taken to address staffing capacity within the Department of Human Services' Medicaid Eligibility Unit and allows North Dakota to staff appropriately to implement the Medicaid Expansion while also training external stakeholders.

NDDHS and its vendor held one invitation-only Tribal Train the Trainer Session and 10 informational sessions across the state for stakeholders who work with low-income individuals. NDDHS subsequently trained over 300 stakeholders. Sessions were held in the state's eight largest communities (Bismarck, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Jamestown, Minot, and Williston) and on two reservations.

As part of the state's focus on raising awareness among American Indians, DHS collaborated with the N.D. Indians Affairs Commission to invite and host the informational "train the trainer" session in Bismarck for tribal stakeholders who work with the health and human services on the four reservations and one Indian Service Area in North Dakota. In addition, informational sessions were held with the support of local tribal hosts and the N.D. Indian Affairs Commission on the Standing Rock Reservation in Sioux County and on the Turtle Mountain Reservation in Rolette County.

This quarter North Dakota also finalized and updated educational materials such as a brochure, training PowerPoints, fact sheets, flyers, and PSAs, identified in the scope of work for outreach and education and has posted them online at www.nd.gov/dhs/medicaidexpansion. In addition, the department mailed Medicaid Expansion informational letters to economic assistance program clients who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program, and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). A 2014 calendar produced for the LIHEAP program was also mailed out and contained information about North Dakota's Medicaid Expansion.

Activities planned for next quarter None. Grant-funded activities have been completed.

Core Areas Completed

- Background Research – North Dakota has estimated that between 20,500 (NDDHS estimate) and 32,000 (Kaiser estimate) state residents may qualify for the state's Medicaid Expansion.
- Stakeholder Involvement –
 - Stakeholders are identified in the Assessment.

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- County social service office directors, supervisors, and Medicaid eligibility workers received on-going policy updates and training on ACA-related eligibility system and policy changes. A new round of eLearning is scheduled for January 2014. County workers will continue to be engaged in design work and testing of the eligibility determination system. County directors have received and will continue to receive regular monthly update briefings and period email updates. This work and consultation process is on-going.
 - NDDHS will continue communicating with other stakeholders, including the Indian Affairs Commission, Tribal and IHS representatives, and others who serve people who may qualify for the Medicaid expansion. DHS has a list of Training Session participants and communicates with them regularly about ongoing Medicaid Expansion developments.
 - NDDHS stays in contact with Navigator and Certified Application Counselor organizations.
 - Stakeholder training sessions were completed in the eight largest communities in North Dakota and training tailored to Native American stakeholders occurred on two reservations. In addition, the Indian Affairs Commission co-hosted a training with NDDHS for Tribal stakeholders who work with low-income persons.
 - Stakeholder feedback has been positive about the Medicaid Expansion and training sessions provided an opportunity for DHS to build and strengthen relationships and communication with participants.
 - NDDHS Medicaid experts accepted and continue to accept invitations to give informational presentations and participate in panel discussions at conferences as documented in past quarterly reports.
- Program Integration – NDDHS divisions serving low-income persons have collaborated throughout this project. For example, a direct mailing to clients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, and Temporary Assistance to Needy families program was mailed in mid-December to make them aware of the Medicaid Expansion.
 - Resources & Capabilities – NDDHS will continue to monitor training needs and other impacts.
 - Governance – A work team is responsible for the implementation of grant activities. The team reports to an Eligibility System Project Governing Committee, which reports to the Executive Steering Committee.
 - Finance – North Dakota did not implement an exchange. NDDHS follows state and department accounting, internal control, and reporting practices.
 - Technical Infrastructure – North Dakota continues to develop and implement information verification tools, online application capabilities, and eligibility determination system development to support the Medicaid Expansion and meet ACA requirements and continues development of the integrated eligibility determination system for Medicaid and economic assistance programs and full integration with the FFM.
 - Business Operations – North Dakota did not implement an exchange.
 - Regulatory or Policy Actions – The Medicaid expansion as authorized in House Bill 1362, which lawmakers passed and Governor Jack Dalrymple signed (www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/63-2013/documents/13-0628-03000.pdf?20130430141247).

Barriers, Lessons Learned, and Recommendations to the Program

Timely final policy decisions and guidance from CMS are necessary for timely business logic construction for portals and timely development of state policy, training, and related outreach materials and efforts. Stakeholders have a high interest, and they anticipated receiving education, outreach, and training earlier than the state was able to provide.

Technical Assistance

NDDHS staff participated in conference calls about the Affordable Care Act implementation, the FFM, and Medicaid expansion and reached out to federal partners for clarification and information as needed.

Exchange Budget

Function	FFY 2012	FFY 2013	FFY 2014
Change Management Plan		\$627,500.00	
FFE Integration Planning		\$129,873.80	
Project Management		\$6,664.40	
TOTAL		\$764,038.20	

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Work Plan

Activity/goal	Staff responsible	Milestones and timeline
Conduct analysis to determine the technical integration requirements and system components needed to interact with the FFM inclusive of a ND consumer portal	Jenny Witham, NDDHHS Chief Information Officer; Val Brostrom, ITD Project Manager; Chris Heyne, ITD Software Development Architect	<i>Completed.</i>
Secure a vendor to help determine how stakeholders are affected by the transition to an online eligibility determination system for the Medicaid expansion and an online health coverage marketplace through the FFM.	Heather Steffl, Executive Management Team Lead for NDDHHS Economic Assistance and Child Support Enforcement Divisions and supervisor of agency public information functions	Request for proposal issued – <i>Completed</i> Contract awarded – <i>Completed</i> Assessment - <i>Completed</i>
Identify considerations for accessing the North Dakota consumer portal including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, client preferences, and comfort level and utilization of technology	Team involving project sponsors, ITD, ITS, NDDHHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Economic Assistance Policy Division, Medical Services Division, and county social service office partners.	The portal design has been <i>completed</i> and developed to meet all ADA requirements. System integration testing has been completed. Updates are provided on an ongoing basis as additional information becomes available about ND's IT systems, online application processes and the implementation of ACA requirements.
Create an effective education and outreach plan, training plan, and budget	Heather Steffl in consultation with contract officer/ NDDHHS Economic Assistance Policy Division Director Carol Cartledge, Medical Services Division staff, and working in partnership with contractor.	Request for proposal issued – <i>Completed</i> Contract awarded – <i>Completed</i> Assessment – <i>Completed</i> Development of Outreach and Education Plan, and Training Plan – <i>Completed.</i>
Implement education and outreach plan, training plan, and budget	Heather Steffl in coordination with Jenny Witham, Irene Karnopp, Carol Cartledge, and department training and communication resources.	Initial training county social services eligibility workers – <i>Completed.</i> Initial training and outreach and education to stakeholders have been <i>Completed.</i> Communication is ongoing as implementation of the Medicaid Expansion continues.

Collaborations/Partnerships

NDDHS continued to have staff from multiple divisions collaborate internally and externally with the state Information Technology Department (ITD), county social service office partners, the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission, and change management vendor HTMS, an Emdeon company, and their subcontractor Aukema and Associates.

• **Role of Partner Insurance Exchange Work:**

ITD is partnering with NDDHS to develop the North Dakota portal integration with the FFM, to prepare Legacy Systems for the ACA, and to manage the project, and design and build a modernized Eligibility System.

County social service office employees continued working with NDDHS Medicaid Eligibility Policy and Economic Assistance Policy staff and ITD staff to define system requirements for the modernized eligibility system. NDDHS has hired one recently retired county eligibility worker to sustain county input and support testing, and NDDHS plans to hire another one in 2014.

HTMS and Aukema & Associates (HTMS subcontractor) provided change management planning services and supported stakeholder training for NDDHS.

The North Dakota Indian Affairs Divisions continued to collaborate with NDDHS and HTMS (and Aukema & Associates) to support stakeholder training on North Dakota Indian Reservations. This collaboration continues.

• **Barriers/Challenges of Partnership:** None at this time.

PRA Disclosure Statement

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