Connecting the Dots: How Medicaid Expansion Impacts Public Health and Improves Health Equity in South Florida

- Florida has the country’s fourth highest rate of uninsured individuals (13%), and 20% of those under age 65 in Miami Dade County (MDC) have no health insurance.

- Medicaid expansion could extend coverage to 805,000 newly eligible Floridians, nearly a quarter of a million of whom live in the Miami metro region (Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties).

- Medicaid expansion, critical to accessing care, increases probability of having a personal doctor, and decreases likelihood of not seeing a doctor because of cost.

- Expansion improves access to myriad types of treatments that both improve health outcomes and save costs, ranging from medication for diabetes and cardiovascular disease, to smoking cessation medications, to treatment of mental health conditions and substance use disorders, to rehabilitation services for patients with severe traumatic injuries.

- Medicaid expansion is associated with improved quality of care and health outcomes including: improved treatment of chronic conditions such as asthma and hypertension; improvements in cardiac surgery patient outcomes and cardiovascular mortality rates; improvements in 1-year mortality among end-stage renal disease patients initiating dialysis; significant increases in cancer screenings and cancer diagnosis and/or early-stage diagnosis rates.

- Medicaid expansion is associated with decreasing disparities in access to and utilization of healthcare by race and ethnicity as well as income.

- Drops in uninsured rates were most significant among Blacks and Hispanics in expansion states with the percent of uninsured Hispanic adults in expansion states dropping almost 20 percentage points (from 38% to 19.3%), as compared to a rate drop of just 6.9 percentage points (from 41.4% to 34.5%) in non-expansion states.

- Reducing disparities in coverage is key to addressing Miami-Dade County’s stark disparities in healthcare outcomes, including, e.g. a death rate due to prostate cancer of 41 deaths per 100,000 Black, non-Hispanic men as compared to 18 deaths per 100,000 White men, and an age-adjusted death rate due to diabetes per 100,000 of 43 among Blacks versus 17 among Whites.

For more information contact Alison Yager at yager@floridahealthjustice.org
2 United States Census Bureau, Quick Facts, Miami-Dade County Florida.
10 Steffani Bailey et al., Tobacco Cessation in Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansion States Versus Non-expansion States. Nicotine & Tobacco Research (May 2019).
16 Sameed Ahmed Khantana et al., Association of Medicaid Expansion with Cardiovascular Mortality, JAMA Cardiology (June 2019).
18 Hendrnx & Luo, Increased Cancer Screening for Low-income Adults Under the Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansion. Medical Care, 56:11 (November 2018): 944-949.
21 Kevin Griffith, Leigh Evans, and Jacob Bor, The Affordable Care Act Reduced Socioeconomic Disparities in Health Care Access. Health Affairs 36:8 (August 2017).
23 http://www.miamidadematters.org/indicators/index/dashboard?id=83017053156222624
24 Ibid.