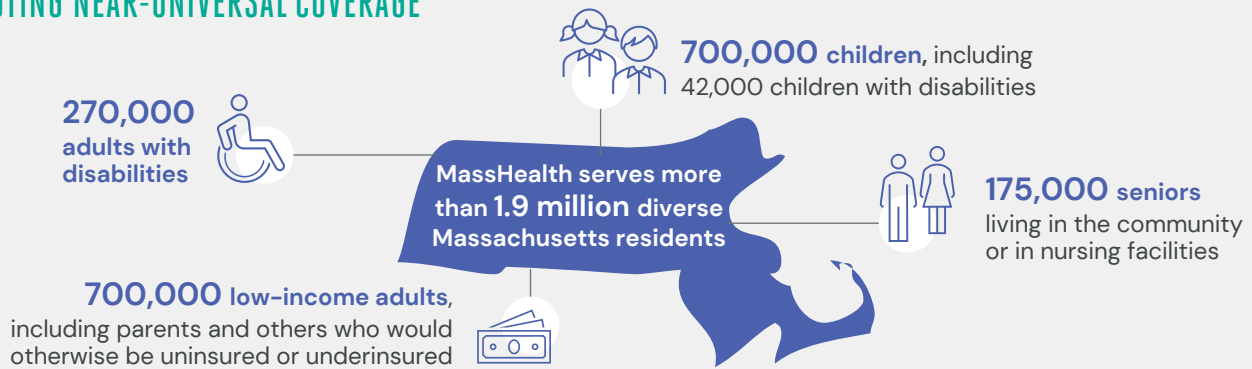


MassHealth's Role in Promoting Health Care Coverage and Access



MassHealth is the cornerstone of health care coverage and access in the state. MassHealth enables people to access the care they need to get and stay healthy and work, and to avoid bankruptcy related to health care costs.

PROMOTING NEAR-UNIVERSAL COVERAGE



PURSUING HEALTH EQUITY

There is widespread evidence nationally and in Massachusetts of significant and pervasive inequities in access to health care and health outcomes—particularly for communities of color. MassHealth is expanding its programmatic focus to find ways to reduce health inequities among the individuals and families it serves.

- **Latinx and Black individuals** make up **30%** of the total MassHealth population.
- Nationally, Medicaid is associated with reductions in adverse health outcomes that disproportionately affect communities of color. For example, access to Medicaid is associated with **reductions in infant mortality** and **lower rates of maternal mortality and depression**.

IMPROVING THE LIVES OF MEMBERS

Increasing access to preventive care.

- Expansion of MassHealth (together with other health care coverage reforms in Massachusetts) was associated with a **10% reduction in emergency department usage** and **increases in rates of cancer screenings**.



Improving health outcomes.

- Expansion of MassHealth (together with other health care coverage reforms in Massachusetts) was associated with **overall improvements in health**, including in body mass index and in proportion of individuals reporting “excellent” health. These gains were most significant **among people of color, women, and seniors**.

Reducing financial instability.

- Low-income non-Medicaid households **spend a smaller share of their budget on food** than Medicaid households, suggesting that in non-Medicaid households, **health care spending may crowd out spending for other necessities**.



For more information on MassHealth's Role in Promoting Health Care Coverage and Access, see the full issue brief at https://www.bluecrossmafoundation.org/sites/g/files/cspkws2101/files/2021-06/MH_Impact_MH-Matters_brief_FINAL.pdf.