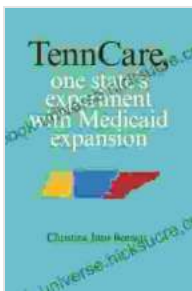


# TennCare One State Experiment: A Comprehensive Analysis of Medicaid Expansion's Impact

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), signed into law in 2010, introduced significant changes to the Medicaid program, including the expansion of Medicaid eligibility to adults with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level.



## TennCare, One State's Experiment with Medicaid Expansion by Harvey J. Platt

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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Print length : 257 pages



As part of the ACA, Tennessee was granted a waiver to implement a unique Medicaid expansion program known as the TennCare One State Experiment (OSE). The OSE was designed to test the effects of Medicaid expansion on healthcare coverage, utilization, and costs, while also exploring the potential for innovative approaches to healthcare delivery.

## Key Findings of the TennCare OSE

1. **Increased Healthcare Coverage:** The OSE led to a significant increase in healthcare coverage rates among low-income Tennesseans. By 2015, the uninsured rate among adults had fallen from 16.5% to 7.1%.
2. **Improved Healthcare Utilization:** Medicaid expansion under the OSE resulted in increased utilization of preventive care services, such as screenings and check-ups. Hospitalization rates also declined, indicating that people were accessing care earlier and avoiding costly emergency room visits.
3. **Reduced Healthcare Costs:** The OSE demonstrated that Medicaid expansion can lead to lower healthcare costs overall. The experiment found that the expansion reduced state spending on Medicaid and uncompensated care, and it also slowed the growth of private health insurance premiums.
4. **Positive Health Outcomes:** The OSE found that Medicaid expansion had a positive impact on health outcomes. People who gained coverage through the expansion experienced improvements in blood pressure control, cholesterol levels, and mental health.
5. **Workforce Impacts:** The OSE also examined the impact of Medicaid expansion on the healthcare workforce. The experiment found that expansion led to an increase in the number of healthcare workers, particularly in rural areas.

## **Innovative Approaches to Healthcare Delivery**

In addition to expanding Medicaid coverage, the TennCare OSE also tested a number of innovative approaches to healthcare delivery, including:

- **Patient-Centered Medical Homes (PCMHs):** PCMHs are primary care practices that focus on providing comprehensive, coordinated care to patients. The OSE found that PCMHs can improve quality of care and reduce healthcare costs.
- **Telemedicine:** Telemedicine allows patients to access healthcare services via videoconferencing. The OSE found that telemedicine can increase access to care for rural and underserved populations.
- **Value-Based Purchasing (VBP):** VBP is a payment model that rewards healthcare providers for delivering high-quality, cost-effective care. The OSE found that VBP can improve patient outcomes and reduce healthcare costs.

## **Lessons Learned from the TennCare OSE**

The TennCare One State Experiment has provided valuable lessons about the impact of Medicaid expansion and the potential for innovative approaches to healthcare delivery. The key lessons learned from the experiment include:

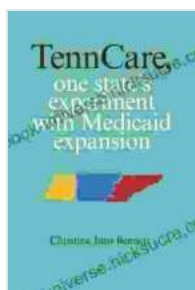
- Medicaid expansion can significantly increase healthcare coverage rates and reduce the number of uninsured.
- Medicaid expansion can improve healthcare utilization, leading to earlier detection and treatment of health conditions.
- Medicaid expansion can reduce healthcare costs overall, including state spending on Medicaid and uncompensated care.
- Medicaid expansion can have a positive impact on health outcomes, improving blood pressure control, cholesterol levels, and mental

health.

- Innovative approaches to healthcare delivery, such as PCMHs, telemedicine, and VBP, can improve quality of care and reduce healthcare costs.

The TennCare One State Experiment has demonstrated that Medicaid expansion can significantly improve healthcare coverage, utilization, costs, and health outcomes. The experiment has also shown that innovative approaches to healthcare delivery can improve the quality and efficiency of care.

The lessons learned from the TennCare OSE can inform policymakers and healthcare providers as they work to expand access to affordable, high-quality healthcare for all Americans.



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