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HHS awards \$4.4 million to Alaska as ‘performance bonus’

15 states receive funds for streamlining and improving processes

(Anchorage, AK) — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services today awarded \$4.4 million to Alaska as a “performance bonus” for streamlining and improving Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization (CHIPRA) processes.

HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius awarded a total of \$206 million to 15 states, including Alaska. This year’s bonuses are more than double the \$75 million awarded to 10 states last year.

“The performance bonus payments are rewards to states for enrolling low-income children and provide a financial incentive to states for doing so,” said Barbara Hale, Children’s Health Insurance Program Administrator for the state. “It’s a win for everyone involved.”

Funding for the bonuses was signed into law February 2009. To qualify for a bonus, two sets of performance goals had to be met by states: taking specific steps to streamline their enrollment and renewal processes to make it easier for families with eligible children to gain coverage; and documenting a significant increase in the number of children enrolled in Medicaid.

“Not only have children in Alaska’s low-income families benefited from the application and renewal simplifications implemented by the state Department of Health and Social Services, but also the Public Assistance caseworkers, who have been able to enroll children with less red tape while removing barriers to care,” Hale said.

“As a result of these efforts, more children have access to and continuity of care, thus improving the quality of services Alaska’s children receive from our state’s health care providers,” she said.

For the complete HHS press release, go to:

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2010pres/12/20101227a.html>.

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