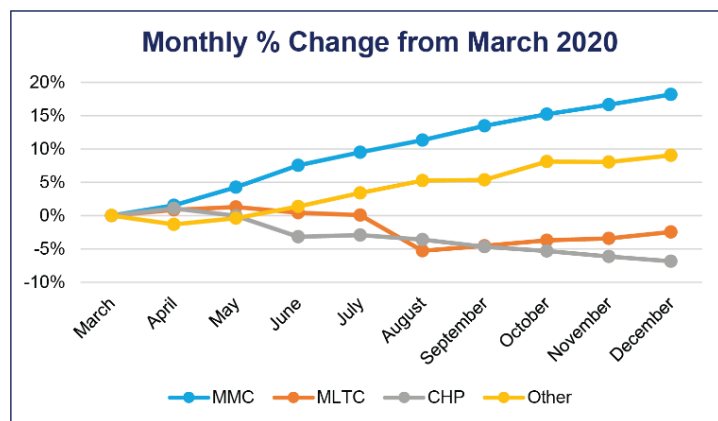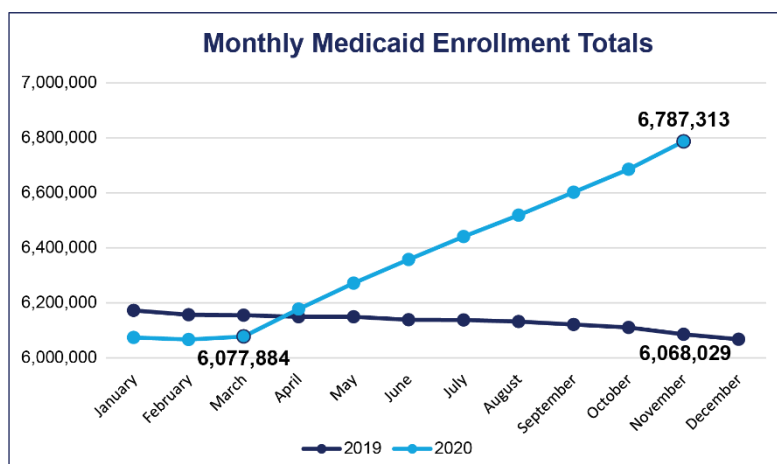# Medicaid Steps Up in Response to the Economic Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic

As the pandemic began to rage in the spring of 2020, New York saw millions of jobs disappear as businesses struggled to survive the economic impacts of the virus. Many New Yorkers were pushed into poverty, and many more lost their employer-sponsored health insurance, **especially those from our most marginalized communities**.

As the number of COVID-19 cases rose and hospitalization rates reached critical levels, access to health care was crucial for struggling New Yorkers. The nine months following the virus's arrival in our state saw **12% growth** in Medicaid enrollment, the largest increase since Disaster Relief Medicaid was created in response to the September 11th attacks. From March to November of 2020, there were over **700,000 new enrollments**.

New York's Medicaid program is an invaluable part of the state's safety net, allowing millions of New Yorkers to seek medical treatment, including for COVID, without fear of financial ruin. As the virus uniquely reminds us, our individual health and safety is intertwined with the health of our neighbors. **We are all connected, and we all benefit when health care is accessible to every person and family in every community across our state**.

Monthly Medicaid Enrollment Totals — Line chart comparing 2019 and 2020 monthly enrollment from January to December. 2020 rises to **6,787,313** in November; March 2020 value is **6,077,884**; 2019 December value is **6,068,029**.

Monthly % Change from March 2020 — Line chart showing MMC, MLTC, CHP, and Other from March to December.

All components of the Medicaid program grew over the course of 2020; each program saw its own proportional rise. This chart shows the breakdown of enrollment at the end of the year between **Medicaid Managed Care**, **Managed Long Term Care** (including Medicaid Advantage Plus), **Child Health Plus**, **and other Medicaid Managed Care** (Medicaid Advantage for dual Medicare-Medicaid recipients, HARP for individuals with severe mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders, and FIDA IDD for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities).

Medicaid matters to countless New Yorkers, like Jacqueline Rodriguez of New York City:

"When I think about having Medicaid one thing that really comes to mind is how grateful I am. I have two children with hemophilia and there are a lot of risks, and complications, and some really tough days. Medicaid provides us the medication they need, and it gives us such a sense of security to know they're not going to be bleeding and they'll be okay that I can't even begin to describe how grateful we are for it."

As the virus persists while the vaccination process gets underway, continued access to Medicaid **must be protected for all New Yorkers** who need it.

Data Sources:
1. NYS Medicaid Enrollment Databook, https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/enrollment/historical/2018-2020_all_months.htm
2. Medicaid Managed Care Enrollment Reports, https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/managed_care/reports/enrollment/monthly/
3. Child Health Plus Enrollment by Insurer, https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/child_health_plus/enrollment/