



# MEDI-CAL STATISTICAL BRIEF

## MEDI-CAL MONTHLY ELIGIBLES TREND REPORT FOR MAY 2013

### **Abstract**

In the first five months of 2013, enrollment in the Medi-Cal program rose by 11.6%, an increase primarily associated with the transition of children previously enrolled in California's Healthy Families Program (HFP) into Medi-Cal. In March 2013, the estimated number of certified eligibles enrolled in Medi-Cal surpassed 8 million, and by May 2013 the number of certified eligibles enrolled in Medi-Cal reached an estimated 8,483,900.

### **Medi-Cal Enrollment Trends**

Each month the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), Research and Analytic Studies Branch (RASB) compiles and presents an estimate of the trend in Medi-Cal eligibles over the most recent 24 months. This report is designed to provide stakeholders with timely explanations of material changes in enrollment trends.

From December 2012 to May 2013, the number of Medi-Cal certified eligibles increased by 11.6%, from 7,605,000 to 8,483,900 (see Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> This increase in enrollment is primarily due to the transition of children previously enrolled in the Healthy Families Program (HFP) into Medi-Cal. For additional information concerning the HFP transition, please visit the [DHCS website](#).

### **Counting Certified Medi-Cal Eligibles**

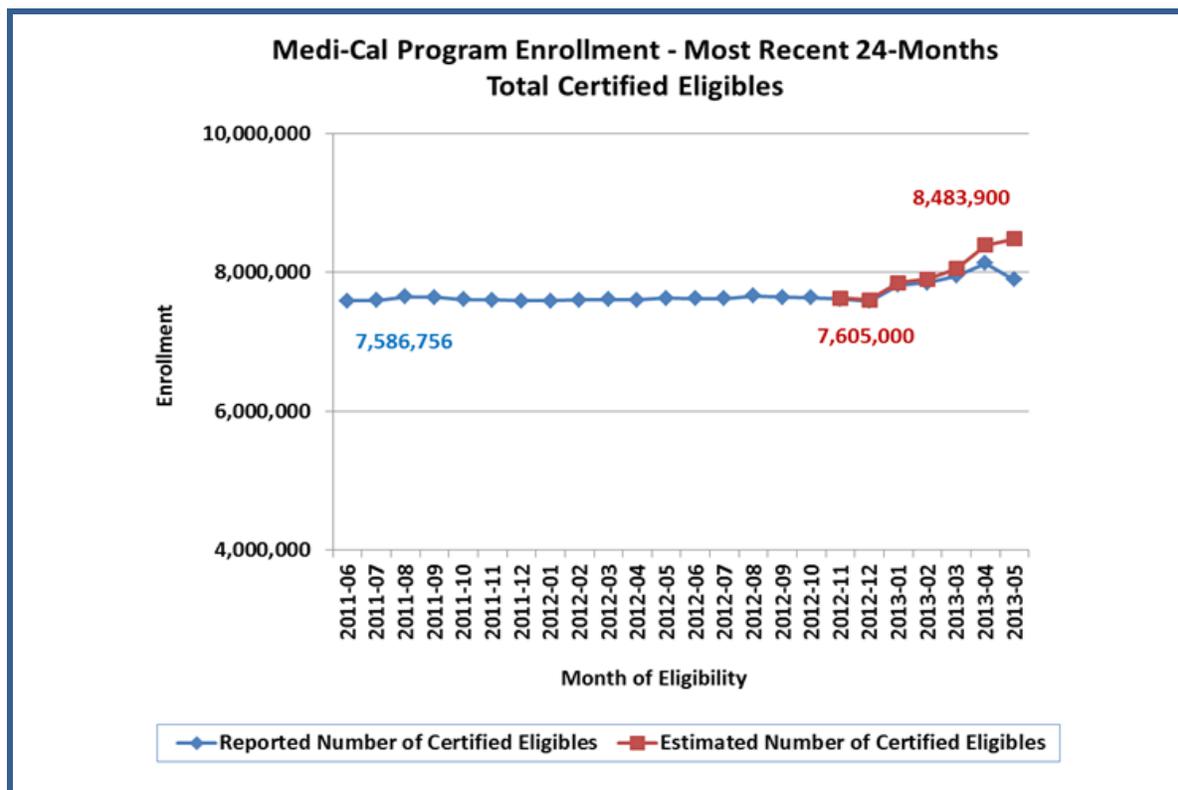
To determine the number of current enrollees, DHCS uses a special definition of Medi-Cal beneficiaries referred to as ***certified eligibles***. Certified eligibles are defined as those beneficiaries who are deemed qualified for Medi-Cal by a valid eligibility determination and have enrolled into the program. Thus, those beneficiaries who may be eligible for Medi-Cal, but have not enrolled, are not counted as certified. This classification also excludes beneficiaries who have a monthly Share-of-Cost (SOC) obligation that has not been met. Finally, some specific populations are excluded from certified eligible counts, including California's Family PACT members and pregnant women granted provisional Medi-Cal enrollment under the Presumptive Eligibility (PE) program.

### Estimating Final Medi-Cal Enrollment Counts

Figure 1, below, displays both a reported and an estimated count for the most recent seven months of the 24-month period. Updates to the enrollment records for a specific month may be made subsequent to that month, reflecting the addition of beneficiaries with retroactive eligibility, as well as other changes to the enrollment record as information is updated. These changes, which result in increases in a particular month's final Medi-Cal enrollment, can only be captured after an elapsed time period. A specific month's count is considered nearly complete six months after the month's end and finalized

12 months after the month's end. For example, the counts for January 2013 are not considered nearly final until July 2013 and not final until January 2014. Fortunately, there is a method for estimating the final enrollment counts that does not require waiting six months. To estimate a recent month's expected final Medi-Cal eligible count, factors derived from past experience are applied to the recent incomplete counts (displayed in Figure 1 as the "Reported Number of Certified Eligibles") to inflate current counts to an expected final value (displayed in Figure 1 as "Estimated Number of Certified Eligibles").

**Figure 1 - Medi-Cal Program Enrollment - Most Recent 24 Months, Total Certified Eligible Beneficiaries**



## Additional Resources

For more information on the HFP transition, including the legislative background and phases of implementation, see DHCS' HFP Transition website at:

<http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/hf/Pages/HFPTransitionStrategicPlan.aspx>.

## Where Can I Find More Information on the Medi-Cal Population

Analysis for this report was done by the RASB of DHCS. RASB compiles official statistics and performs analytical studies to assist DHCS in achieving its mission and goals. More information regarding Medi-Cal

enrollment, program expenditures, and other relevant topics is available at the RASB website.

To find more reports like this one or to learn more about the Medi-Cal population, please use the many resources available at the following websites:

The web address of DHCS' RASB is:

[http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/dataandstats/statistics/Pages/RASS\\_Default.aspx](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/dataandstats/statistics/Pages/RASS_Default.aspx)

The DHCS Medi-Cal Budget Estimates can be found at:

<http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/dataandstats/reports/mcestimates/Pages/default.aspx>

### **IF YOU PLAN TO CITE THIS PAPER IN A SUBSEQUENT WORK, WE SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING CITATION:**

California Department of Health Care Services, Research and Analytic Studies Branch. *Medi-Cal Monthly Eligibles Trend Report for May 2013*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Health Care Services.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

This document provides a brief summary of complex subjects and should be used only as an overview and general guide to the Medi-Cal program. The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policies or legal positions of the California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS) or the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). These summaries do not render any legal, accounting, or other professional advice, nor are they intended to explain fully all of the provisions or exclusions of the relevant laws, regulations, and rulings of the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Original sources of authority should be researched and utilized.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Research and Analytic Studies Branch. (2013). Medi-Cal Certified Eligibles. Available at: [http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/dataandstats/statistics/Pages/RASB\\_General\\_Medi\\_Cal\\_Enrollment.aspx](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/dataandstats/statistics/Pages/RASB_General_Medi_Cal_Enrollment.aspx)