

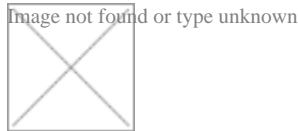


Weekly Checkup

Declining Exchange Growth Could Lead to Higher Premiums

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During the 2014-2015 open enrollment period of the Health Insurance Marketplace, the national number of exchange beneficiaries increased from 8 million to roughly 11.7 million. While the national increase seems significant, it is helpful to examine how individual states' marketplaces are growing because the market in each state is independent. In some states, there have been decreases in the rates that new enrollees have signed up for health care through the marketplace. In the case of Vermont and Washington, there have been decreases in the states' total exchange population. These trends are noteworthy because growing insurance populations lead to growing risk pools, and growing risk pools help alleviate premium growth. In those states where the exchange population growth has become stagnate or decreasing, premiums may be more likely to climb higher in the future.^[1]



[1] "Health Insurance Marketplaces 2015 Open Enrollment Period: March Enrollment Report," ASPE Issue Brief, Department of Health and Human Services, March 10, 2015, available at: http://aspe.hhs.gov/health/reports/2015/MarketPlaceEnrollment/Mar2015/ib_2015mar_enr