

SCOPE STATEMENT

KanCare: Reviewing the Timeliness of Medicaid Eligibility Determinations

Launched in January 2013, KanCare is the program through which the State of Kansas administers Medicaid. KanCare offers health care for people with limited income, which may include pregnant women, children, and low-income families with children. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) jointly administer KanCare. KDHE maintains financial management and contract oversight of the KanCare program, and KDADS administers the Medicaid waiver programs for disabilities, mental health issues, and substance abuse problems, as well as overseeing the state hospitals and institutions.

In July 2015, the state also launched the Kansas Eligibility Enforcement System (KEES)—a web-based application intended to help streamline eligibility determination for state medical and social service benefits. In January 2016, the state transferred eligibility determinations for pregnant women and disabled individuals from the Kansas Department of Children and Families (DCF) to KDHE. DCF still maintains responsibility for eligibility determinations for social programs.

Recent news articles report that many Kansans who are seeking Medicaid benefits are being forced to wait months for services because of continuing problems with the KEES system and the transfer of eligibility determinations from DCF to KDHE.

Legislators have expressed concerns regarding these delays and would like to know what is being done to resolve them.

A performance audit in this area would address the following question:

1. **Has the time required to complete Medicaid eligibility determinations increased significantly in recent years, and what are the underlying causes of any delays?** To answer this question, we would collect eligibility-determination data from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) including the application date, processing time, and final notification date for Medicaid applicants over the past five years. We would analyze that data to determine if time required to complete eligibility determinations has increased significantly during that time for various groups of Medicaid applicants. We would follow up with KDHE officials and conduct additional testwork as necessary to determine the underlying causes for any delays in Medicaid eligibility determinations. In doing this work, we would specifically evaluate how the state's transition to KanCare, the implementation of the KEES system, and the transfer of eligibility determinations from the Department for Children and Families (DCF) to KDHE may have contributed to any delays we identify. We would also work with KDHE officials to understand the actions they have taken or plan to take to address the time required to process Medicaid eligibility determinations. For any future plans, we would work with KDHE officials to determine what resources will be necessary to implement those plans and when they are expected to be completed. We would perform additional

work in this area as necessary.

Estimated Resources: 3 LPA staff

Estimated Time: 4 months (a)

(a) *From the audit start date to our best estimate of when it would be ready for the committee.*