Health Reform WK-EDGE Wrap Up, ENROLLMENT—NEWS: 18 states showed notable drop in uninsured rate in 2015, (Feb. 10, 2016)

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Eight states saw significant drops in their uninsured rates in 2015, and all but one had expanded Medicaid programs under section 2001 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) (P.L. 111-148). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) national health interview survey revealed that for the first time, the percentages of adults insured through public programs significantly exceeded the number of uninsured. The AP noted that of the 18 states with either statistically significant coverage gains or notable reductions in uninsured percentages, 12 have Republican governors.

**Biggest reductions.** Kentucky led the pack in the reduction of the uninsured rate, at 6.5 percentage points. These numbers are particularly significant in light of how Governor Matt Bevin (R), newly elected, famously opposed the ACA and has stated that he intends to change the state’s Medicaid expansion, as well as shut down the state’s health insurance exchange, KyNect (see *Will the newly elected Kentucky governor send the ACA packing?*, November 10, 2015). Arizona’s rate dropped by 5.9 percent, with New York close behind at 5.6 percent. California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, and Michigan rounded out the “statistically significant” group. The survey only included 37 states, with the rest’s estimates considered unreliable.

**Other revelations.** Overall, the percentage of uninsured adults decreased from 16.3 percent in 2014 to 12.9 percent in 2015. Private coverage increased by 2.7 percent during this time, and those covered by public programs increased to 18.6 percent. The report observed that from 2010 to 2013, the percentage of adults uninsured remained stable (except for young adults), then began dropping after 2013. When tracked by income, short-term trends showed that the uninsured rates for the poor and near-poor were nearly the same from 2010-2015. Not surprisingly, those in Medicaid expansion states were 6.7 percent more likely to have public coverage in 2015, and the uninsured rate was 7.3 percent lower in expansion states overall.