

## **Governor: Medicaid transformation making significant progress**

In the two years since work began to transform the Alabama Medicaid program, the state has made significant progress to create a healthcare delivery system that not only benefits those who depend on Medicaid for healthcare coverage, but is good for taxpayers as well, according to Governor Robert Bentley.

In a December 18 news conference, Governor Bentley announced the approval of the first probationary Regional Care Organizations and praised the collective work of the applicants and Alabama Medicaid in meeting the most recent milestone. Regional Care Organizations are locally led managed care organizations that will provide services for Medicaid enrollees at an established cost when the program is implemented in late 2016.

“Today would not be possible if not for the hard work all of you have put into it and I want you to know that I appreciate it,” he said. He also expressed appreciation to State Senator Greg Reed of Jasper and State Representative Jim McClendon of Springville who co-sponsored legislation to create the new managed care structure for Medicaid.

The move to transform Medicaid began in late 2012 with the creation of a commission by Governor Bentley to evaluate the financial structure of the agency and identify ways to increase efficiency while helping ensure the long-term sustainability of the agency.

Governor Bentley emphasized that a transformed Alabama Medicaid program not only benefits those who depend on Medicaid for health care coverage, but it is good for taxpayers as well. He stressed that RCOs represent a holistic approach to caring for the Medicaid population, and will increase the number of enrollees who are seen by their primary care physician – a more efficient and less costly approach -- instead of in an emergency room or hospital setting.

“My goal as governor is to make Medicaid the most efficient and effective system for the people enrolled in the program. The ripple effect of that will benefit everyone, not just those on the program.”