

Medicaid benefits in Oregon expand to cover young adults with special health care needs

Starting January 1, 2025, the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) will offer benefits to certain young adults under a new Medicaid eligibility category: **Young Adults with Special Health Care Needs (YSHCN)**.

Why it's important

In Oregon, one in five children under age 18 has a special health care need.¹ More than 80 percent of YSHCN in the state don't receive the proper tools to care for their health and social needs adequately.² People identified as YSHCN frequently need more health and health-related social services than others of the same age. Providing no-cost health insurance helps these young adults to access their regular care during an important time of transition to adulthood.

Examples of special health care needs:

- Physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Long-standing medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, or spina bifida
- Behavioral or mental health conditions like depression or substance use

Who qualifies as YSHCN?

To qualify as YSHCN, a person must:

- Be 19 or 20 years old in 2025³

¹ Retrieved from <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=10025&r=39>

² Retrieved from <https://www.ohsu.edu/occyshn/oregons-children-and-youth-special-health-care-needs>

³ Oregon plans to expand the YSHCN category to cover people up through age 25 by 2030. YSHCN coverage in future years is subject to funding availability. Oregon is committed to ensuring availability of YSHCN benefits as planned.

- Have at least one qualifying health care need that began before age 19
- Have an individual or family income up to 305% of the [Federal Poverty Level](#)

Current OHP members who qualify as YSHCN will automatically receive YSHCN benefits. Individuals can also complete a short set of questions in the OHP application to qualify for YSHCN.

About YSHCN benefits

Starting January 1, 2025, YSHCN will:

- Qualify for enhanced vision and dental benefits and [Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment \(EPSDT\)](#) up to their 26th birthday
- Have access to [Health-Related Social Needs \(HRSN\) benefits](#)
- Receive OHP coverage if they have an individual or family income up to 305% of the [Federal Poverty Level](#)

What this means for people working with YSHCN members

Oregon is working with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on how to implement this expansion of benefits. You will continue to receive information about YSHCN in the coming months. Right now, it's important to know that:

- In 2025, the YSHCN benefit will cover approximately 6,000 new young adults who currently don't qualify for OHP. In addition, approximately 16,000 current OHP members will receive enhanced benefits through YSHCN.
- Some YSHCN will turn 21 during 2025. Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) will need to adjust their systems to ensure that YSHCN maintain their EPSDT and enhanced vision and dental coverage after their 21st birthday.
- CCOs and OHA will need to screen YSHCN individuals annually to determine their need for HRSN benefits.
- YSHCN will remain enrolled in OHP for 24 months before redetermination.

Questions? 1115waiver.renewal@odhsoha.oregon.gov

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Contact Chelsea Egbert at chelsea.egbert@oha.oregon.gov or 503-945-5772 (voice and text). We accept all relay calls.