

October 31, 2015

Patrick O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature
State Capitol, Room 2018
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

RE: ACCESSNebraska Quarterly Report

Dear Mr. O'Donnell,

In accordance with Legislative Bill 657 (2015) ACCESSNebraska Quarterly Reports, I have attached a copy of the most recent quarter. This report contains the Economic Assistance and Medicaid information. We are pleased to report improvement from the previous quarter.

The attached report covers the quarter from July through September 2015.

Respectfully,



Courtney N. Phillips, MPA
Chief Executive Officer
Department of Health and Human Services

**Department of Health and Human Services
Legislative Report
LB 657**

ACCESSNebraska

July - September 2015 Quarter

REPORT FOR: LEGISLATURE
REPORT DATE: OCTOBER 31, 2015
LEGISLATIVE BILL: LB 657
COMMITTEE NAME: HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
CONTACT PERSON: COURTNEY PHILLIPS, CEO
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DOUGLAS WEINBERG, DIRECTOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION
CALDER LYNCH, DIRECTOR
MEDICAID AND LONG-TERM CARE DIVISION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Health and Human Services administers and manages eligibility for Economic Assistance Programs and Medicaid and Long-Term Care through a service delivery system known as ACCESSNebraska. The ACCESSNebraska program was started in September 2008 with a public website containing an online application for benefits. ACCESSNebraska was fully implemented in April 2012. ACCESSNebraska operations contain the following components:

- ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov website
- Document Management with two imaging centers (Lincoln and Omaha)
- Customer Service Centers for Economic Assistance (Fremont and Scottsbluff) and Medicaid (Lexington and Lincoln)
- Local Offices (over 50 throughout Nebraska)
- N-FOCUS eligibility system

In May 2015, ACCESSNebraska began operating with a cross-divisional team focused on addressing operational improvement through a series of process initiatives. The team is led by Steering Committee members Courtney Phillips, CEO and Felix Davidson, Nebraska COO. The team meets weekly with the current focus on stabilizing the Economic Assistance operations. Stabilization is defined as the operational performance at or above the established metrics. Once stabilization is achieved, the team will turn its focus to the overall operations and begin assessing, evaluating and creating the long term strategy (operations, systems, workforce, administration) for ACCESSNebraska.

ACCESSNebraska has two Program Managers who facilitate ten areas of focus related to the short term objective of stabilizing the Economic Assistance Operations. The focus areas include:

1. Document Management
2. Call Management
3. Field Operations and Task Management
4. Recruiting/Retention
5. Policy Reviews and enhancements
6. Workforce Management/Capacity Planning
7. Communications
8. Legislative Reporting
9. Change Management
10. ACCESSNebraska Mobile Application Project with UNL Raikes School

The purpose of this report is to reflect the operational performance for the July –September 2015 Quarter. ACCESSNebraska operational performance improved during the last quarter. Here are a few of the highlights.

Economic Assistance

- Reduced the average call wait time by 9:28 from August to September. The September average call wait time was 4:42. This is below the established 5 minute target.
- The average days to process (number of days from application receipt to eligibility determination) was 11.43 days for all Economic Assistance Programs in September. This is vast improvement from September 2014 total of 40.78 days to process. This is under the Federal processing benchmarks of 30 days for all Economic Assistance programs with the exception of SNAP expedited which should be processed in 7 days.
- State reported processing timeliness was 96.42%. This is above the 95% federal benchmark. It is also a vast improvement from September 2014 timeliness rate of 68%.
- The payment accuracy rate is at 98.14% (April 2015-USDA).

Medicaid

- Average Call Wait Time for September was 4:24. The average call wait time continues to be at or below the 5 minute target.
- The median application processing time for all Medicaid programs was 21 days in September. This is under the federal benchmarks of 45 days for Children and Families and 90 days for Aged and Disabled.
- Medicaid received 7,442 initial applications in September, this number is comparable to the normal amount of applications received in a month. Medicaid enrollment remains at 13% of Nebraska's population.
- The eligibility accuracy rate is 98.17% (September 2015-State).

Process Improvements

- Work processes were streamlined in the Omaha ANDI Center to scan daily mail by the start of the business day. Documents are available for staff in assisting customers.
- Case management of complex cases was assigned to staff in local offices. This allows specialized staff to focus efforts.
- The SNAP recertification process was simplified to reduce case handling time.
- Income verification utilizing online data sources (Work Number, IRS, State Eligibility Wage, Social Security, and Unemployment) was initiated. This reduces the amount of client verification requests sent.
- Work team focused on Top 10 Reasons clients call to look for efficiencies in customer service.
- Economic Assistance implemented increased operational reporting to assist in monitoring the work.
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program regulations were modified and simplified to match other Economic Assistance Programs.
- Medicaid and Long-Term Care implemented LB 605 Suspend Medicaid in September to improve customer service when individuals are released from Corrections.

Communications

- A Key Performance Dashboard was published to the public on the ACCESSNebraska website.
- Economic Assistance Management utilize a Daily Huddle to exchange information and discuss operational performance.
- Economic Assistance began using Manager Huddles to communicate operational performance information to direct staff.
- Economic Assistance SharePoint site was updated and additional information added to assist staff in locating information needed to determine eligibility.
- Economic Assistance and Medicaid policy staff worked with legal staff to develop and implement a single Release of Information form for all programs.

Staffing

- Administration focused on reducing amount of time a staffing position is vacant. The recruitment and hiring processes were refined to create some efficiencies.
- Staff vacancies in Economic Assistance as of October 1 included 5 vacancies in Fremont Customer Service Center and 9 vacancies in Scottsbluff Customer Service Center. Medicaid had 6.5 vacancies in the Lincoln Customer Service Center and 2 vacancies in the Lexington Customer Service Center. The local offices had 7 vacancies in Economic Assistance and 3 vacancies in Medicaid statewide. This is a total of 21 vacancies in Economic Assistance and 11.5 vacancies in Medicaid.
- Newly hired staff attending training in Economic Assistance as of October 1, was 30 staff. Medicaid had 13 newly hired staff in training, as of October 1.

LB 657 ACCESSNebraska Quarterly Report July – September 2015

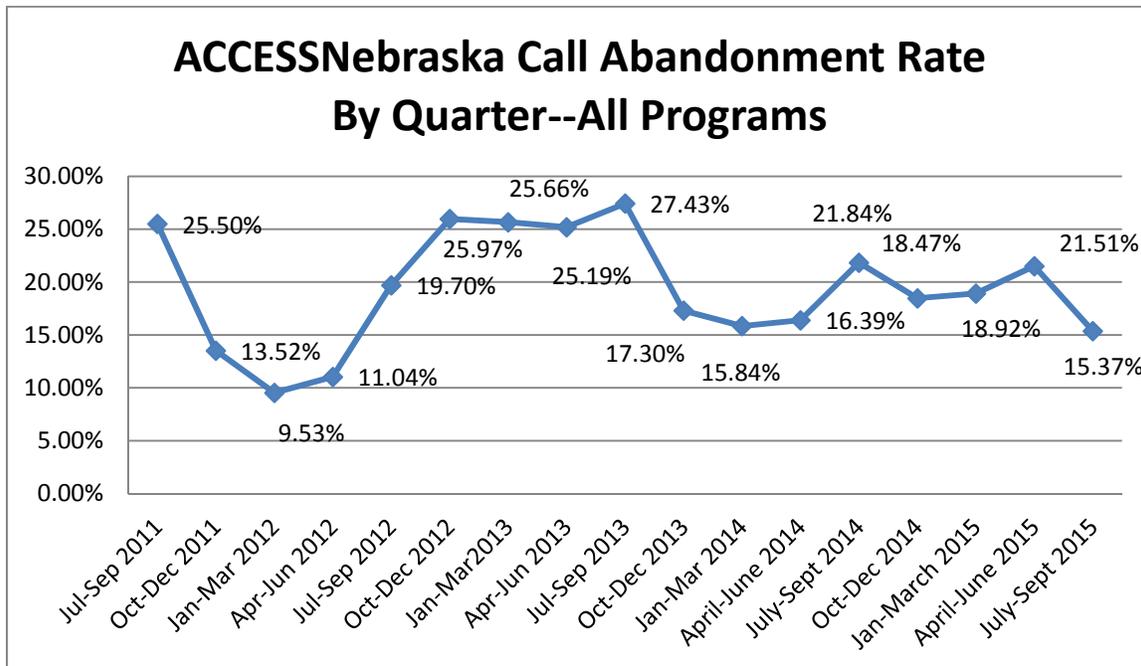
Element One: Call Wait Times

Average Call Wait	July	August	September	Quarter
Economic Assistance	15:51	14:10	4:42	11:23
Medicaid	4:06	5:14	4:24	4:35

Element Two: Call Abandonment Rates

Call abandonment is the number of calls that are terminated before a staff member answers. The termination is due to the client hanging up or the phone signal was dropped.

Call Terminations	July	August	September	Quarter
Economic Assistance				
Abandonment Rate	24%	23.11%	8.83%	18.95%
Number of Abandons	9800	9407	3274	22,481
Average Time to Abandon	12:14	11:20	7:15	11:08
Medicaid				
Abandonment Rate	10.29%	12.59%	10.69%	11.21%
Number of Abandons	3427	4375	3620	11,422
Average Time to Abandon	3:17	3:49	3:23	3:31



Element Three: Timeliness of Initial Applications by benefit program including client or department processing reason for untimely application.

Program	Timeliness Percentage
SNAP Expedited	99.18%
SNAP Non-Expedited	96.59%
Child Care	93.83%
Low Income Home Energy Assistance	93.41%
Aid to Dependent Children	98.12%
Aid to Aged, Blind and Disabled Payment	98%
Medicaid and CHIP	96%

The following chart shows reason for the untimely processing percentages (client, agency, third party and system).

Program	Agency	Client	Third Party	System
SNAP Expedited	51%	37%	2%	10%
SNAP Non-Expedited	57%	30%	4%	9%
Child Care	54%	35%	5%	6%
Low Income Home Energy Assistance	25%	61%	3%	11%
Aid to Dependent Children	47%	32%	9%	2%
Aid to Aged, Blind and Disabled Payment	15%	62%	18%	5%
Medicaid and CHIP	24%	68%	8%	0

Element Four: Timeliness of Renewal Applications by benefit program including client or department processing reason for untimely applications.

Program	Timeliness Percentage
SNAP Non-Expedited Timely	92.88%
SNAP Non-Expedited Untimely	98.55%
SNAP Expedited Late	98.56%
SNAP Non-Expedited Late	99.36%
Child Care	81.58%
Aid to Dependent Children	89.66%
Aid to Aged, Blind and Disabled Payment	82.83%
Medicaid and CHIP	89.34%

SNAP Timely Recertification includes recertification forms received by the Department on or before the 15th of the month of expiration.

SNAP Untimely Recertification includes recertification forms received by the Department from 16th-31st of the month of expiration.

SNAP Late Recertification includes recertification forms submitted in the 30 days following the end of certification.

The untimely application processing reason is not available at this time. The data element is not available in the system. The data element will be available starting November 9, 2015 for reporting purposes. The Department will begin reporting in next Quarter's report.

Element Five: Data related to client cases closed who reapply for benefits within thirty days and sixty days after the case closure.

Economic Assistance report data calculation illustrates the proportion of client cases where every Economic Assistance Program was closed, thus requiring a new application be submitted for benefits within the timeframes requested. Medicaid report data calculation takes the number of Medicaid recipients that benefits were closed and then reopened during the timeframes. It is the Department's desire that the same calculation methodology be utilized for ACCESSNebraska. The next report our intent will be to provide a single calculation that takes into account all ACCESSNebraska programs.

	Reapply Within 30 Days	Reapply between 30 - 60 Days
Economic Assistance		
Closed 6/1/2015	.12%	11.93%
Closed 7/1/2015	.42%	10.88%
Closed 8/1/2015	.31%	10.21%
Medicaid		
Closed 6/1/2015	16.73%	7.25%
Closed 7/1/2015	17.17%	6.99%
Closed 8/1/2015	16.73%	8.16%

Element Six: Any other data relevant to the effectiveness of the ACCESSNebraska program.

- ACCESSNebraska Monthly Dashboard-September 2015



Dept. of Health & Human Services
(DHHS)
September, 2015

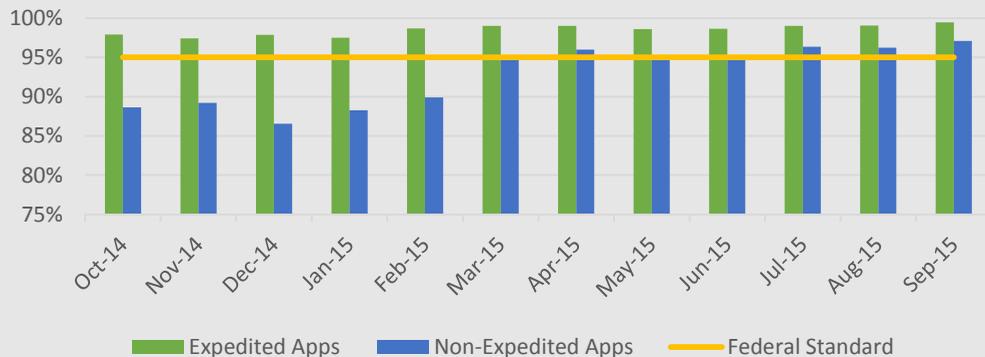
Performance Metrics
ACCESS NEBRASKA Program



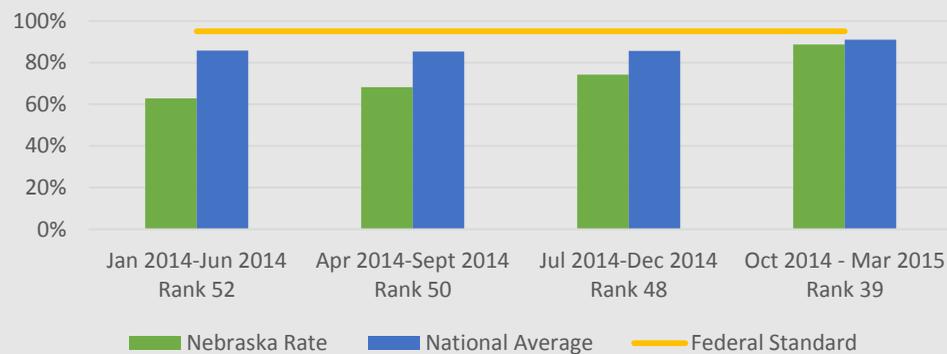
SNAP (Food Stamps) – Key Performance Metrics



State Reported SNAP (Food Stamps) Application Processing Timeliness



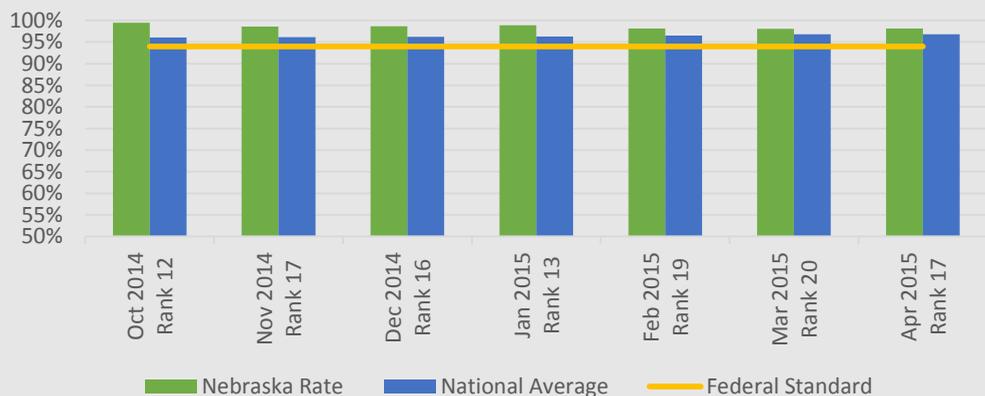
USDA Reported SNAP (Food Stamps) Application Processing Timeliness



This is a DHHS generated report. Data is based on the percentage of SNAP initial applications received which were processed within SNAP federal timelines. In order to meet expedited timeliness, an application must be processed within 7 days. The timeline for non-expedited applications is 30 days.

Data is based on information provided to states from the USDA. Data is reported quarterly using a six month rolling average of SNAP Quality Control data reported by all states/territories. Quality control in Nebraska is conducted by staff within the division of Public Health. **The January-June 2015 data is not available at this time**

USDA SNAP (Food Stamps) Payment Accuracy Rate



USDA SNAP (Food Stamps) Denial Accuracy Rate



Data is based on information provided to states from the USDA. Data is reported monthly using SNAP Quality Control data reported by all states/territories. Payment accuracy rate measures the amount of correct SNAP benefits provided to households. Quality control in Nebraska is conducted by staff within the Division of Public Health.

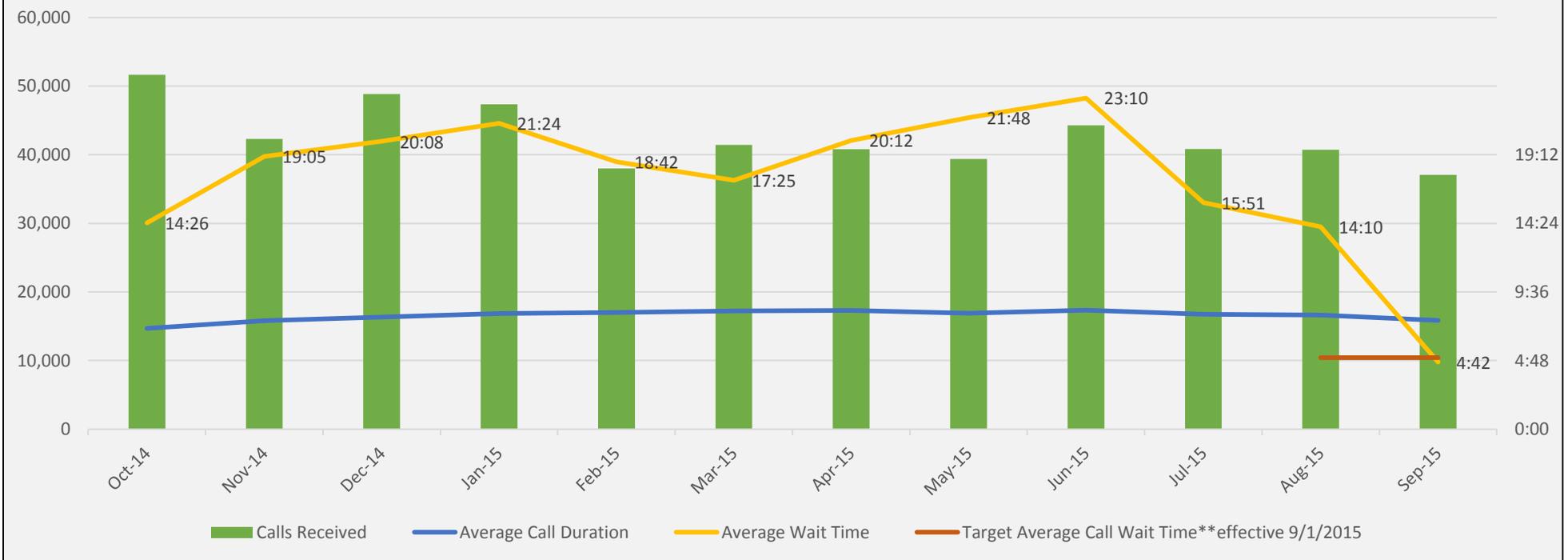
Data is based on information provided to states from the USDA. Data is reported monthly using SNAP Quality Control data reported by all states/territories. Denial accuracy rate measures whether a household's SNAP benefits are correctly closed or denied, whether the household was informed of their ineligibility in a timely manner and whether the notice of action provided to households is accurate. Quality control in Nebraska is conducted by staff within the Division of Public Health..



Economic Assistance – Service Center Metrics



Economic Assistance (Food Stamps, Aid to Dependent Children, Childcare) Service Center



Nebraskans Enrolled in SNAP (Food Stamps) Program – 9% of Population

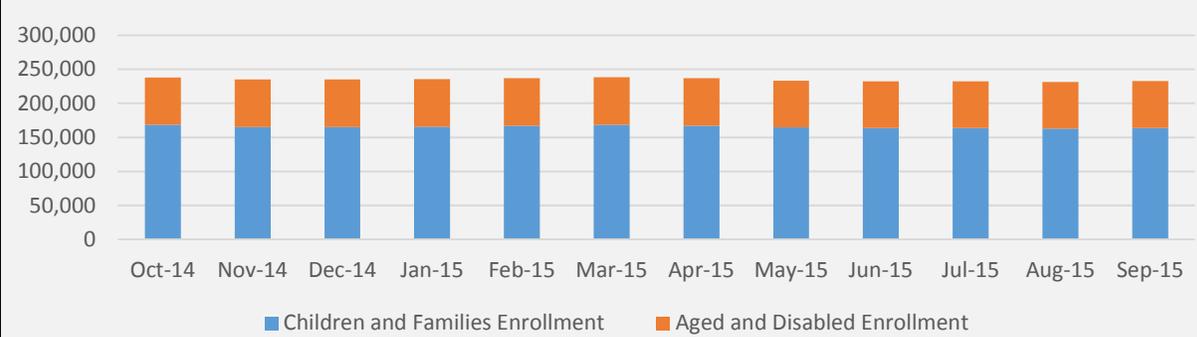
Economic Assistance Enrollment	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15
SNAP (food stamp) Households	77,051	76,902	77,151	77,774	77,644	77,808	77,449	77,616	77,887	78,264	78,781	78,742
SNAP (food stamp) Individuals	173,589	173,225	173,296	174,483	173,508	173,617	172,752	172,934	173,608	174,963	176,663	176,472
Aid to Dependent (ADC) families	6,418	6,196	6,200	6,140	6,052	5,917	5,775	5,654	5,723	5,705	5,721	5,766
Children in Child Care Subsidy	17,865	18,124	18,096	17,535	17,637	17,977	18,313	17,976	18,776	18,256	18,306	18,647



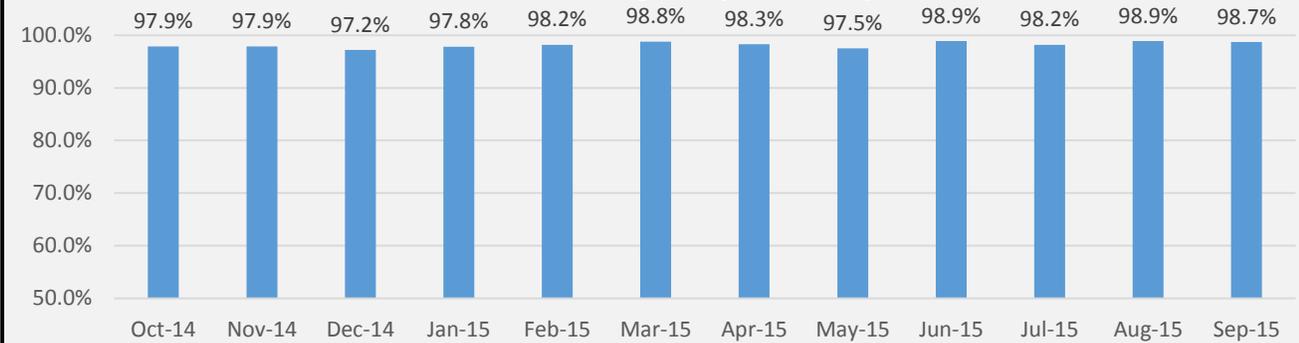
Medicaid – Key Performance Metrics



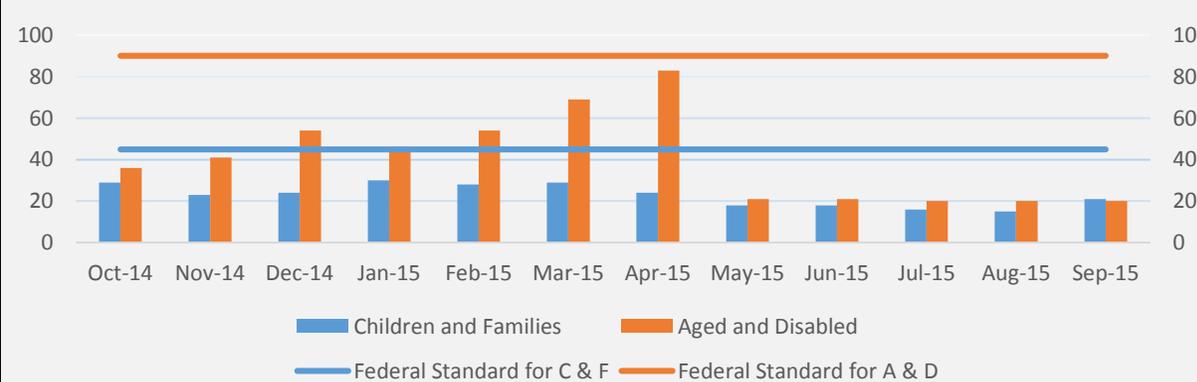
Nebraska - Medicaid Enrollment



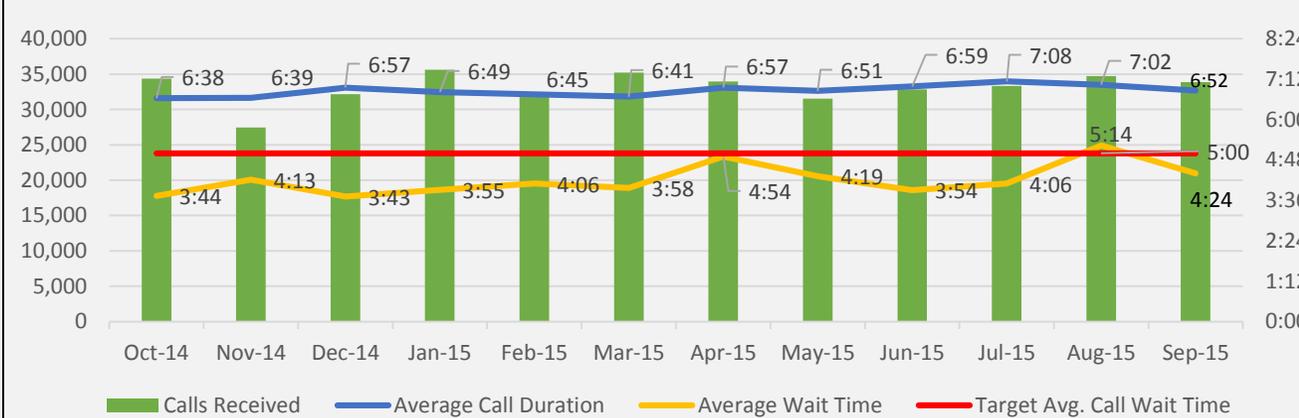
Medicaid Eligibility Accuracy



Application Timeliness to Federal Standards (Days): Below the line is exceeding the standard.



Medicaid Service Center



Nebraskans Enrolled in Medicaid – 13% of Population

Medicaid Enrollment	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15
Total Enrollment	237,921	234,857	235,185	235,523	236,754	238,380	236,853	233,112	232,359	232,088	231,269	232,574
Children and Families Enrollment	168,446	165,288	165,126	165,605	166,890	168,359	167,084	164,494	163,858	163,716	162,821	163,946
Aged and Disabled Enrollment	69,475	69,569	70,059	69,918	69,864	70,021	69,769	68,618	68,501	68,372	68,448	68,628