



## Coverage has Begun!

April 1, 2016 | Mikki Stier, Iowa Medicaid Director

After more than a year of preparation, hard work and unprecedented cooperation among Iowa Medicaid, its stakeholders and federal partners, IA Health Link coverage has begun.

Iowa's most vulnerable populations now have a healthcare delivery system focused on better coordination and improved quality of care. They have access to health plans with the latest technology, providing new benefits beyond what Medicaid has traditionally offered. While this is a significant step forward for members, this is also a much-needed step toward a more predictable and sustainable budget for our taxpayer-funded program.

In early 2015, Governor Branstad announced the Iowa High Quality Healthcare Initiative, also known as Medicaid Modernization. Last summer, the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) selected Amerigroup Iowa, Inc., AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa, Inc., and UnitedHealthcare Plan of the River Valley, Inc. to offer health coverage for the majority of Iowa's Medicaid members.

Since that time, we've worked closely with the managed care organizations (MCOs) and our federal partners at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to build a robust network of providers across the state, ensuring choice, quality and access for our members. CMS has provided us with guidance and technical assistance, and will continue to ensure that we deliver a comprehensive and thoughtful health delivery system for Iowa's Medicaid members.

As of today, April 1, 2016, coverage has begun. But, our outreach and efforts to educate and assist members and providers and listen to their feedback continues with public listening sessions, member enrollment assistance, provider training and an adaptive communication strategy to support this transition.

The goal of this initiative is to improve the coordination and quality of care that Medicaid members receive while Iowa works towards a predictable, sustainable state budget. We intend to do just that. IA Health Link is the product of cooperation and partnership. I thank our state staff, federal partners, stakeholders and new health plans for their dedicated work. I thank our members, providers and the greater public for their support as we continue this effort to improve the health of Iowans.