Arkansas Medicaid’s ARKids First program is one of the most successful children’s health care programs in the United States. When it was implemented, ARKids First was seen as an innovative program that later became a model for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) federal mandate. ARKids First provided for the health care needs of more than 90,000 Arkansas children in State Fiscal Year 2012.

About the Survey

ARKids First continuously strives to improve its quality. To this effect, Medicaid Managed Care Services (MMCS), an independent organization, has surveyed the parents of ARKids First beneficiaries. The results will be used to examine beneficiary satisfaction with the ARKids First health program.

MMCS used the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) program and followed its surveying protocol. CAHPS is scientifically designed to measure and report the experiences that form consumer health care satisfaction. This tool was jointly developed by Harvard Medical School, RAND and the Research Triangle Institute, and funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

MMCS conducted the latest survey by mail from February to May 2012. All individual responses and comments were kept confidential.
Who Was Surveyed

All ARKids First B beneficiaries who had been enrolled for at least six months prior to the survey were eligible to participate. From this group, MMCS mailed surveys to the parents of 1,650 randomly-selected ARKids First B beneficiaries. After excluding beneficiaries with undeliverable addresses or who no longer met eligibility criteria, 1,523 beneficiaries received a survey.

How They Responded

MMCS received completed surveys from the parents of 525 (32.4 percent) beneficiaries before the cutoff date. Of these, 496 were eligible for analysis, resulting in a final response rate of 32.6%.
## Self-Reported Utilization Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visiting the doctor</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting medical care for regular/routine</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health care needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting medical care for illness/injury</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing a specialist</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing a dentist</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting prescription medicine</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking treatment or counseling</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A high number of doctor visits</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with the following on a scale from 0 to 10 (0=“worst possible” and 10=“best possible”). The scores below represent an average of all responses received.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal doctor</td>
<td>8.82</td>
<td>8.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialists</td>
<td>8.88</td>
<td>8.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentists</td>
<td>8.81</td>
<td>8.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of care</td>
<td>8.57</td>
<td>8.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the ARKids First B beneficiaries who responded, the percentage of respondents indicating a high degree of satisfaction (a score of 8 or higher):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal doctor</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialists</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentists</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of care</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of respondents reported no problem seeing a doctor or nurse since enrolling in ARKids First B, **compared to 79%** that reported no problem before joining the program.

of respondents reported no problem getting prescription medicines since joining ARKids First B, **compared to 73%** that reported no problem before joining the program.

of respondents reported no problem getting urgent care from a doctor’s office or the emergency room since enrolling in ARKids First B, **compared to 78%** that reported no problem before joining the program.
Quality of Care

Getting the Care You Need:

84% of beneficiaries’ parents who responded to the survey indicated that it was “always” or “usually” easy:

- Getting appointments with specialists.
- Getting the care, tests or treatment through ARKids First B.

Getting Care without Long Waits:

88% of respondents said they “always” or “usually”:

- Received an appointment for regular or routine health care as soon as they wanted.
- Received immediate care for illness or injury as soon as they wanted.
Customer Service

Courtesy, Respect and Helpfulness of the Customer Service Staff:

78% of beneficiaries’ parents surveyed said that ARKids First B customer service staff “always” or “usually”:

- Treated them with courtesy and respect.
- Were as helpful as they thought the staff should be.
Doctors Who Communicate Well:

92% of respondents agreed that their doctor “always” or “usually”:

- Listened carefully to them.
- Explained things in a way they could understand.
- Showed respect for what they had to say.
- Spent enough time with their child.

Shared Decision Making:

94% of respondents agreed that their doctor “definitely” or “somewhat”:

- Talked with them about the pros and cons of each choice for treatment or health care.
- Asked which choice they thought was best for their child.
Beneficiary Satisfaction

ARKids First B Program:

The average ranking for ARKids First B based on a scale of 0 to 10.

8.48

of the respondents gave ARKids First B a rating of 8 or above.

78%

“This program is wonderful; every child should have (it); thank ya.”

— Parent from Pulaski County
Medicaid Managed Care Services (MMCS) provides utilization review and quality assurance services for Arkansas Medicaid's ARKids First and other waivered managed care programs. MMCS is a division of the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care (AFMC).

Community-based and clinically oriented, AFMC works collaboratively with health care plans, providers, facilities and physicians to identify opportunities for improvement and encourage innovation in health care. AFMC strives to ensure health care quality in a meaningful and effective way by initiating quality improvement projects and disseminating information about best practices.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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