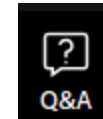
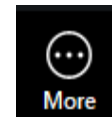


Communication Tips

The following communication tips ensure everyone can participate fully and has equal access to information:

- Make sure you are on mute unless speaking.
- All participants should state their names and pause 3 seconds before continuing (e.g., “this is Shadonna,” count 1, 2, 3....comment). This gives attendees the chance to identify who is speaking.
- Presenters should pause 10 seconds to allow attendees time to read the slide before speaking and wait 5 seconds before moving to the next slide. This allows someone using an interpreter to follow and participate in asking questions.
- **For questions:** Please place them in the **Q&A box**.
To find it, click **More** at the bottom of your Zoom screen, then select **Q&A**.
- For comments, please place them in the chat. We are collecting feedback and will review all responses at the end of the session.



Connecting Communities & Medicaid Session #7

Aug 12, 2026



NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES

Connecting Communities and Medicaid (CCM)

- Department Updates (LaQuana Palmer)
- H.R. 1 Communication Research Results and Updates (Neimand Collaborative)
- Questions and Answers (Franciso Guzman)
- Closing (Monica F. Johnson)



LaQuana Palmer

Deputy Director
Office of Communications and
Engagement
NC Medicaid



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Health Benefits



NCMEDICAID

Communications Research Results

Neimand Collaborative
August 5, 2026



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Health Benefits

Purpose Overview

As North Carolina prepares to communicate upcoming changes to Medicaid, a statewide pulse survey first established the existing communications landscape. Findings from that research then informed a concept test evaluating two potential campaign directions. User testing provided additional insights.

The research was designed to:

1. Measure beneficiaries' awareness of the upcoming changes
2. Identify their concerns and remaining questions
3. Understand how they expect and prefer to receive information
4. Evaluate how effectively potential campaign concepts support understanding, actionability and motivation

Research Approach and Methodology

Statewide Beneficiary Survey	Campaign Concept Test	User Testing
Purpose: Establish a baseline understanding of beneficiary awareness, concerns, information needs and communications expectations.	Purpose: Evaluate two campaign concepts in English and Spanish across understanding, actionability and motivation.	Purpose: Assess whether participants can identify who is affected, whether the changes apply to them and what will change when.
Audience: North Carolina adults ages 18–64 covered by NC Medicaid Method: Self-guided online survey		
Sample Size: N=295	Sample Size: N=598	Sample Size: N=5
Field Dates: July 14–22, 2026	Field Dates: July 23–30, 2026	Session Dates: July 20–24, 2026

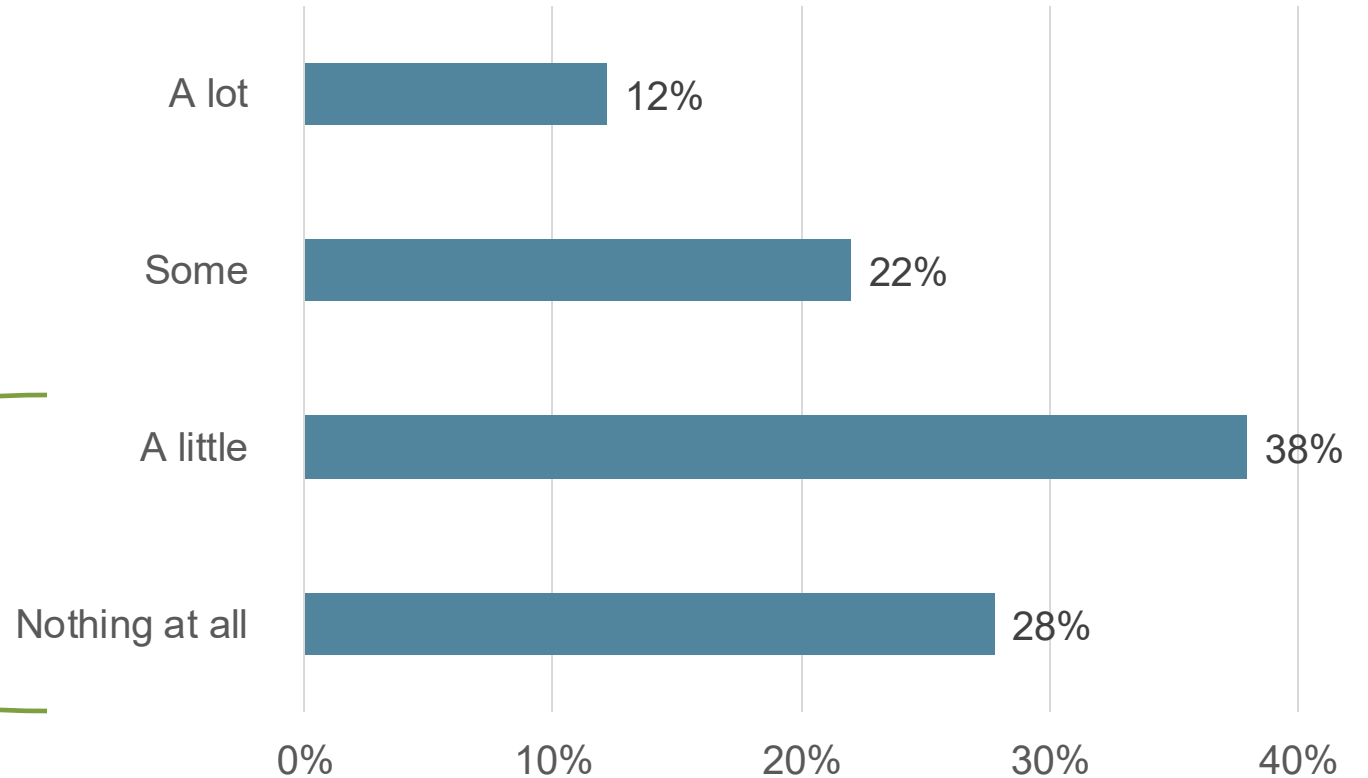
Results: Statewide Survey

Awareness of Upcoming Changes

Most beneficiaries had limited awareness of the upcoming Medicaid changes, with 66% reporting they had heard nothing at all or only a little.

Net:
66%

How Much Beneficiaries Have Heard About Upcoming NC Medicaid Changes



Q: How much, if anything, have you heard about new rules for NC Medicaid that will begin over the next year? (Nothing at all, A little, Some, A lot) N=295

Confidence Navigating the Changes

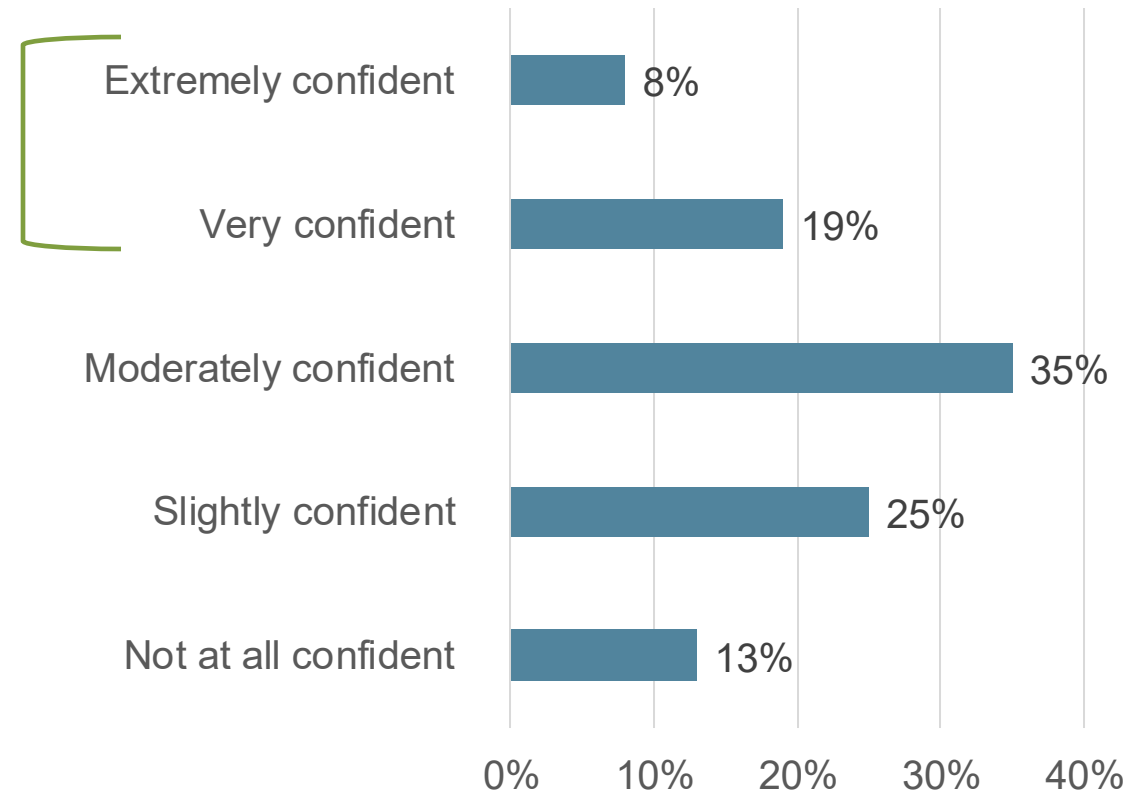
Beneficiaries who reported greater familiarity with the changes also reported greater confidence in navigating them.

Only 27% of beneficiaries felt very or extremely confident they would know what to do if the new rules applied.

Confidence was higher among beneficiaries who were more familiar with the upcoming changes: 56% of those who had heard a lot felt very or extremely confident, compared with 17% of those who had heard only a little.

Net:
27%

How Confident Beneficiaries Feel Navigating the Upcoming Changes



Q: If these new rules do apply to you or someone in your household, how confident are you that you would know what to do? (Choose one) (Not at all confident, Slightly confident, Moderately confident, Very confident, Extremely confident) N=295

Q: How much, if anything, have you heard about new rules for NC Medicaid that will begin over the next year? (Nothing at all, A little, Some, A lot) N=295

Concerns About Keeping Coverage

Uncertainty about their own understanding of the upcoming changes, and their ability to successfully navigate them, was clear throughout beneficiaries' responses.

When asked what worried them most, respondents overwhelmingly focused on the uncertainty of maintaining Medicaid coverage. Some questioned whether they would continue to qualify under the new rules, while others expressed concern about being able to meet new administrative requirements.

Concerns About Keeping Coverage	Concerns About Meeting New Requirements
<i>"[I am most concerned] that me and my kids won't be able to get the care that we need."</i>	<i>"I could miss a letter in the mail, and everything could go wrong."</i>
<i>"That I will lose my coverage."</i>	<i>"I would be most worried about losing Medicaid coverage because I missed paperwork or didn't understand the new requirements."</i>
<i>"That I won't be able to get my medications if I lose my Medicaid."</i>	<i>"That I won't be able to renew my coverage on time."</i>
	<i>"I [am] afraid I will be kicked off for making too much."</i>

Q: What worries you most about these new Medicaid rules? (Open end) N=295

Information Beneficiaries Want to Better Understand

Beneficiaries most often wanted to know whether the changes would apply to them and what would be required to maintain Medicaid coverage.

Across open-ended responses, two information needs emerged most frequently.

1. Does this apply to me?

Beneficiaries asked how the changes would affect their own circumstances, including:

- Employment or income
- Disability or mental health status
- Caregiving responsibilities
- Children or family composition

2. What will be required?

With questions about:

- Work, school and volunteer expectations
- Documentation requirements
- Renewal procedures
- Available exemptions

Q: Based on what you've read, what questions, if any do you have about upcoming changes to NC Medicaid? (Open end) N=295

Preferred Timing for Medicaid Communications

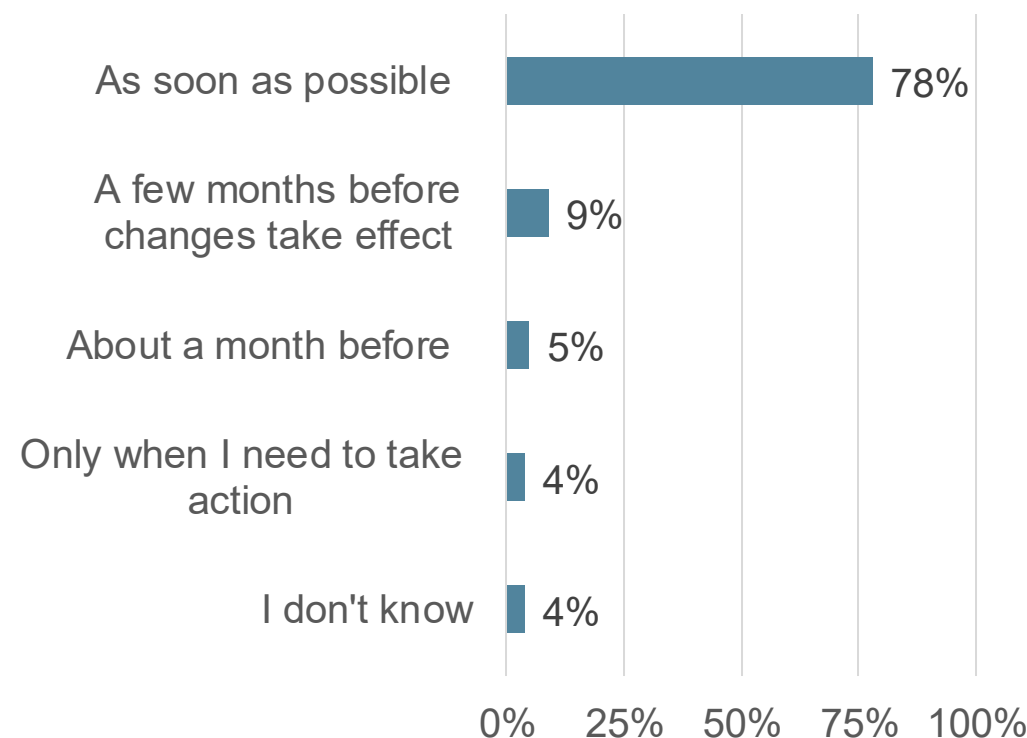
Preferences about timing were highly consistent—**nearly eight in ten beneficiaries wanted to receive information about coverage changes as soon as possible.**

Open-ended responses reinforced the preference for advance notice, with beneficiaries emphasizing the importance of knowing about potential changes early enough to plan.

"Making sure everyone who could possibly be affected knows months in advance to have time to plan."

"Start sending information out when they find out there is going to be a change versus waiting til people recertify."

When Beneficiaries Want to Receive Information About Coverage Changes



Q: When would you want to receive information if changes to your Medicaid coverage affected you? (Choose one) (As soon as possible, A few months before changes take effect, About a month before, Only when I need to take action, I don't know) N=295

Expected and Trusted Sources of Medicaid Information

Beneficiaries expected information to arrive through multiple channels but consistently looked to NC Medicaid and their local Department of Social Services (DSS) as the primary authorities on what changes mean and require.

What beneficiaries expected:

- 76% expected to first hear through DSS, NC Medicaid or another official Medicaid-related source.
- 48% expected to hear from their local DSS.
- 36% selected a mailed letter from local DSS, the most frequently chosen individual response.
- No single communication channel was selected by a majority.

Who beneficiaries trusted:

- 66% identified NC Medicaid as one of their most trusted sources.
- 45% identified local DSS.
- 26% selected health plans.
- 21% selected health care providers.
- Community organizations, employers, faith leaders and personal contacts were also noted by smaller percentages/samples.

Results: User Testing

User Testing Adds Qualitative Context

Usability testing reinforced several needs identified in the statewide research.

- Five Medicaid beneficiaries reviewed the website and draft communications materials to assess whether they could identify who is affected, what is changing and when changes take effect.
- The sessions were designed to observe how people navigate and interpret the information, not to measure the prevalence of beneficiary opinions.
- Findings are directional because of the small sample and participants' individual eligibility circumstances.
- The results provide real-world examples that help explain the broader survey and concept test findings.

Beneficiaries First Need to Know, “Does This Apply to Me?”

Across the research, personal relevance emerged as the most immediate information need.

- Participants struggled when information about who is affected was combined with information about what is changing.
- Some participants could understand the policy description but still could not determine whether it applied to them.
- Participants repeatedly raised questions about disability status, parents, children and other individual circumstances.
- **Recommendation:** Clearly separate “Who is affected?” from “What is changing?” across webpages, flyers and campaign materials.

to keep their coverage. Some non-citizens will lose their coverage. This page tells you what is changing and what you need to do.

There are four important things to know:

1. Many adults ages 19 through 64 will have to show they work or participated in an approved activity.
2. Many adults ages 19 through 64 will have to renew Medicaid every six months.
3. Medicaid may pay medical bills for care provided before you apply.
4. Many non-citizens will no longer be able to have Medicaid coverage.

1. Many adults ages 19 through 64 will have to show they work or participated in an approved activity.

Starts January 1, 2027

Some adults will need to work, volunteer or go to school to keep their Medicaid. These are called work and community engagement requirements.

This probably affects you if you have Medicaid or want to apply for it, and if **all of the following are true:**

- you are ages 19 through 64, and
- you do not have a disability, and
- you are not pregnant or eligible for postpartum coverage (12 months after a pregnancy ends), and
- you are not a parent, guardian, caretaker relative or family caregiver of a dependent child under age 14 or a person with a disability and
- you do not qualify for an exception or exclusion*

If you are required to follow the work and community engagement rules and you do not, you may lose your Medicaid coverage.

* See more details, including who qualifies for an exception and how to meet the requirements: [NC Medicaid Work and Community Engagement Requirements](#)

2. Many adults ages 19 through 64 will have to renew Medicaid every six months.

Starts January 1, 2027

If you are an adult age 19 through 64, you may need to renew your Medicaid more often.

What is changing

Right now, most people with Medicaid must renew (or “recertify”) once a year. NC Medicaid sends a recertification letter that might ask questions or ask for more information about

Clear Next Steps Build Confidence

Users felt more confident when information is broken into clear, practical actions.

- Statewide research finding: Only 27% of beneficiaries felt very or extremely confident they would know what to do if the changes applied to them.
- User Testing insights:
 - Participants responded positively to clear calls to action and materials that broke information into simple sections.
 - Several participants said confidence came from information written in everyday language and organized into easy-to-follow steps.
 - Participants sometimes had to reread policy descriptions or said they would need someone else to explain the information.
- **Recommendation:** Use plain language, short sections, checklists and direct instructions to help people know what comes next.

Timing Must Be Easy to Understand

Multiple implementation dates can create confusion without a clear visual timeline.

- Statewide research finding: Nearly eight in ten beneficiaries wanted information as soon as possible, and concept test participants continued to ask when changes would begin and what they needed to do.
- User Testing insights:
 - Participants noticed the October 1, 2026 and January 1, 2027 dates but did not always understand which change corresponded with each date.
 - Seeing multiple dates across webpages led some participants to question when changes would happen or whether information was inconsistent.
- **Recommendation:** Use a simple timeline that clearly distinguishes:
 - October 1, 2026: Changes affecting some non-citizens
 - January 1, 2027: Work and community engagement requirements begin
 - What audiences should do before each date

Results: Concept Test

Tested Concepts

Concept 1 Keep Your Coverage

Keep *Your* Coverage



Stock photo. Posing by model. For illustrative purposes only.

New Medicaid requirements are coming for adults ages 19-64. Taking steps now can help you keep the health coverage you count on.

Learn what you need to do:
medicaid.nc.gov/changes

NCMEDICAID
NCDHHS

Your *health coverage* matters.

Mantén *tu* cobertura



Foto de archivo. Retrato de modelo. Para fines ilustrativos únicamente.

Los nuevos requisitos de Medicaid para adultos entre 19 y 64 años de edad están en camino. Actuar desde ahora puede ayudarte a mantener la cobertura médica con la que cuentas.

Más información sobre lo que necesitas hacer en:
medicaid.nc.gov/cambios

NCMEDICAID
NCDHHS

Tu *cobertura médica* es importante

Concept 2 Know What's Next

NCMEDICAID
Know What's Next.

New Medicaid requirements may affect your coverage.

-  **Watch** your mail.
-  **Update** your information.
-  **Respond** on time.
So you know what to do when changes begin.

Find your next step: medicaid.nc.gov/changes

NCDHHS

Be Ready.

NCMEDICAID
Infórmate sobre lo que viene.

Los nuevos requisitos de Medicaid podrían afectar tu cobertura médica.

-  **Revisa** tu correo.
-  **Actualiza** tu información.
-  **Responde** a tiempo.
Para que sepas qué hacer cuando empiecen los cambios.

Infórmate sobre tus próximos pasos:
medicaid.nc.gov/cambios

NCDHHS

¡Prepárate!

Evaluation Framework

Concepts were evaluated across 3 dimensions.

Understanding

- After reviewing this communication, how well do you feel you understand what these upcoming Medicaid changes could mean for you or your household?

Actionability

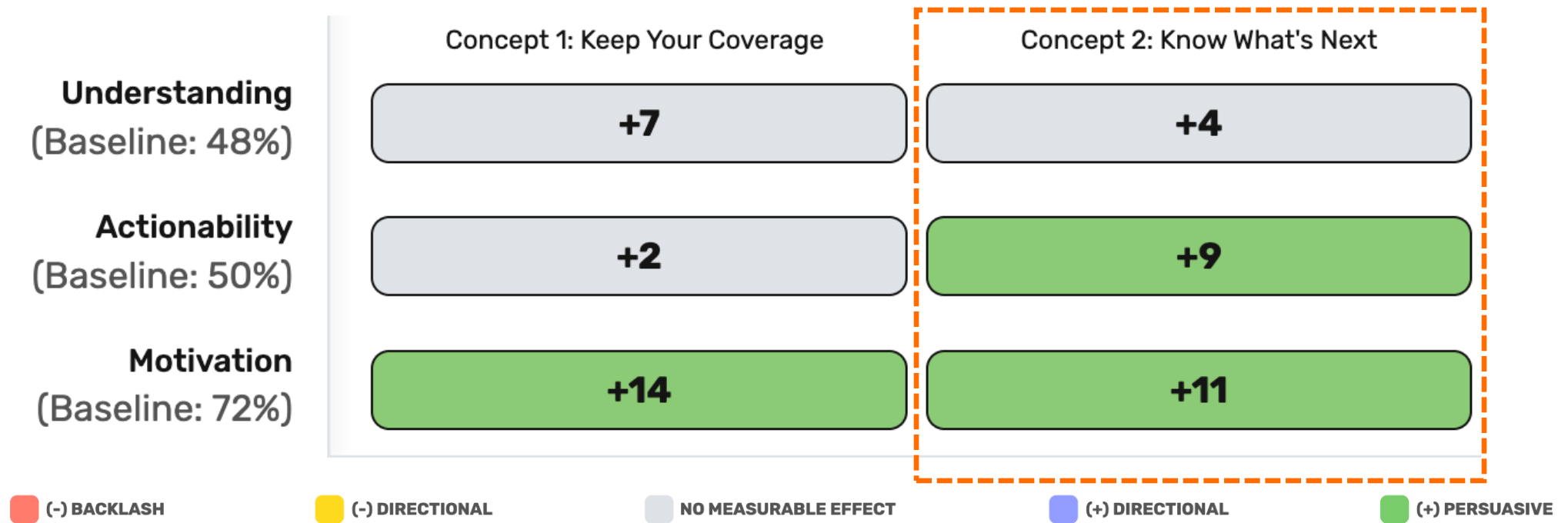
- After reviewing this communication, how clear is it what your next step should be if these Medicaid changes affect you or your household?

Motivation

- After reviewing this communication, how likely are you to take the next step to find out whether these Medicaid changes affect you or your household?

Message Performance Across Understanding, Actionability and Motivation

“Know What’s Next” is the strongest concept, persuading the target audience on actionability and motivation.



Q: After reviewing this communication, how well do you feel you understand what these upcoming Medicaid changes could mean for you or your household? (Completely, Quite a bit, A little, Not at all)
Q: After reviewing this communication, how clear is it what your next step should be if these Medicaid changes affect you or your household? (Extremely clear, Very clear, Slightly clear, Not at all clear)
Q: After reviewing this communication, how likely are you to take the next step to find out whether these Medicaid changes affect you or your household? (Very likely, Somewhat likely, Somewhat unlikely, Very unlikely) N=598

Remaining Information Needs

Neither concept moved the target audience on understanding, with beneficiaries still wanting to know more about the changes.

Information Still Needed

NET: 60%

Desire for specific details about changes and their implementation timeline	21%
Concern about the impact of changes on personal coverage and benefits	13%
Interest in understanding the requirements and process associated with the changes	11%
Seeking information on next steps or required actions	6%
Questions about eligibility criteria and actions for continued coverage	6%
Nothing	40%

Q: What, if anything, would you still want to know after seeing this communication? (open end) N=598

Remaining Information Needs

"I would want to know when the changes are suppose[d] to begin. And if there is any thing I need to do on my end".

"If I will be able to keep mine. I've been really really worried about it."

"I would want to know what I need to do to keep my Medicaid. I would want to meet with someone."

"I would want to know the terms of volunteering and work."

"If I'm still gonna get the same benefits as I'm getting now from my Medicaid."

"A complete list of exactly what changes are being made, and how I could most easily find that information."

"If this will affect permanently disabled individuals."

Q: What, if anything, would you still want to know after seeing this communication? (open end) N=598

Implications

Make the Upcoming Changes Easier to Understand

Beneficiaries most often called for communications that were clear, specific and personally relevant—ultimately helping them understand if the changes apply to them and, if so, what they need to do.

When asked what NC Medicaid could do to make the upcoming rules easier to understand, respondents emphasized four needs:

- **Plain language:** Explain what is changing in straightforward, easy to understand, everyday language.
- **Personal relevance:** Clarify who will be affected and how the changes apply to individual circumstances.
- **Practical guidance:** Provide step-by-step information about required actions, documentation, exemptions and other requirements.
- **Multiple formats and reminders:** Use channels such as mail and text to share clear information and reminders, along with easy ways to get help.

Moving Forward

- **Lead with what is most urgent.** Not all changes are equal, and some carry far greater impact and should be weighted/prioritized accordingly.
- **Answer the questions beneficiaries care about most.** “Does this apply to me?” and “What do I need to do?”
- **Translate complex requirements into clear next steps.** Plain language, checklists, timelines and visual cues should help beneficiaries understand required actions, documentation, exceptions and exclusions and key implementation dates.

Q&A



Monica F. Johnson

Engagement Manager
Office of Communications and Engagement
NC Medicaid



NC DEPARTMENT OF
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Division of Health Benefits

Upcoming Engagements

NC Medicaid Back Porch Chat

A webinar focused on H.R. 1.

Join NC Medicaid Back Porch Chat for an informational overview of H.R. 1 and the changes coming to Medicaid. Gina Hamilton, Deputy Director for Member Operations at NC Medicaid will explain the changes and address questions following the presentation.

Date: Thursday, Aug. 20, 2026

Time: Noon- 1p.m.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

**The webinar will include live Q&A*



Upcoming Engagements

Understanding H.R. 1 and Its Impact on Unhoused Individuals

NC Medicaid invites community organizations **that support individuals experiencing homelessness** to join us for an informational webinar designed to help partners understand upcoming NC Medicaid changes associated with the federally mandated [H.R.1](#) and learn how these changes may affect the unhoused population.

Date: Aug. 26, 2026

Time: Noon- 1 p.m.

Register Now:

- <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/g/MKY9qZcEFu>
- **The webinar will include live Q&A*



The poster features a blue background with four white hand silhouettes reaching towards the center. At the top left is the NCDHHS logo. In the center is a white icon of a house being held by two hands. The main title is in large, bold, white capital letters. Below the title is a subtitle in smaller white text. The date and time are listed below the subtitle. At the bottom right is a white button with blue text.

NCDHHS

**NC MEDICAID
INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR:
UNDERSTANDING H.R.1
CHANGES & IMPACTS ON
INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS**

Equipping Community Organizations
with Information on NC Medicaid
Changes

Date: Aug. 26, 2026
Time: Noon

Register Now

Expand our Network

Feel free to invite community partners to join the workgroup! Check the chat for the survey link, which will also be included in the meeting notes.

[CCM Interest Form](#)



Additional Questions?

Contact us at:

Medicaid.NCEngagement@dhhs.nc.gov



Next Meeting

Wednesday, September 9

NC Medicaid understands that together, we can create meaningful impact and improve health outcomes for all Medicaid beneficiaries.

