

# S.C. Medicaid agency, USC publish a mountain of Medicaid data on new SC HealthViz website

- **Lauren Sausser**, The Post & Courier
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If you've ever wondered how many children covered by Medicaid in South Carolina saw their dentists last year or how many prescriptions were filled for Medicaid patients in the state — if you've ever wondered anything about Medicaid at all — then you're in luck.

The University of South Carolina and the state Medicaid agency have just published a mountain of Medicaid data on a new website, [shealthviz.sc.edu](http://shealthviz.sc.edu), which includes information about Medicaid enrollment in South Carolina, disease prevalence by county and health disparities across the state.

The S.C. Department of Health and Human Services, which administers Medicaid in South Carolina — also called Healthy Connections — consumes more than a quarter of the state budget, a larger share than any other state agency.

According to the new SC HealthViz website, more than 1 million residents are enrolled in Medicaid in South Carolina, including about 40 percent of all children in the state. The agency spends more than \$6 billion a year.

The new website includes such detailed information as data on pediatric dental visits (687,760 during the 2013 fiscal year), the number of prescriptions filled by Medicaid beneficiaries (7,686,139 during the same time period) and the number of Medicaid patients who visited an emergency room that year (367,052).

All this data can be drilled down even further by county, age, eligibility group and type of Medicaid plan.

For example, the website makes it possible to find the exact number of Medicaid kids in Charleston County who saw a dentist between July 1, 2012, and June 30, 2013. It was 23,921.

The website is evidence of a larger trend in health care to make big data more transparent to consumers.

The federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid published information on thousands of hospitals in May, showing [neighboring facilities bill Medicare vastly different prices](#) for the same procedures.

In April, the S.C. Department of Health and Human Services published several spreadsheets online to prove [many hospitals in the state posted millions of dollars in profit](#) between 2008 and 2011.

Ana Lòpez-De Fede, director of USC's Division of Policy and Research on Medicaid and Medicare, spearheaded SC HealthViz. Lòpez-De Fede and S.C. Medicaid Director Tony Keck were not available to answer questions about the project Friday.

Colleen Mullis, a spokeswoman for the Medicaid agency, said the department plans to officially unveil the website sometime this week in a press release.

Mullis did not know how much the project cost, but confirmed that the Medicaid agency paid for it.

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