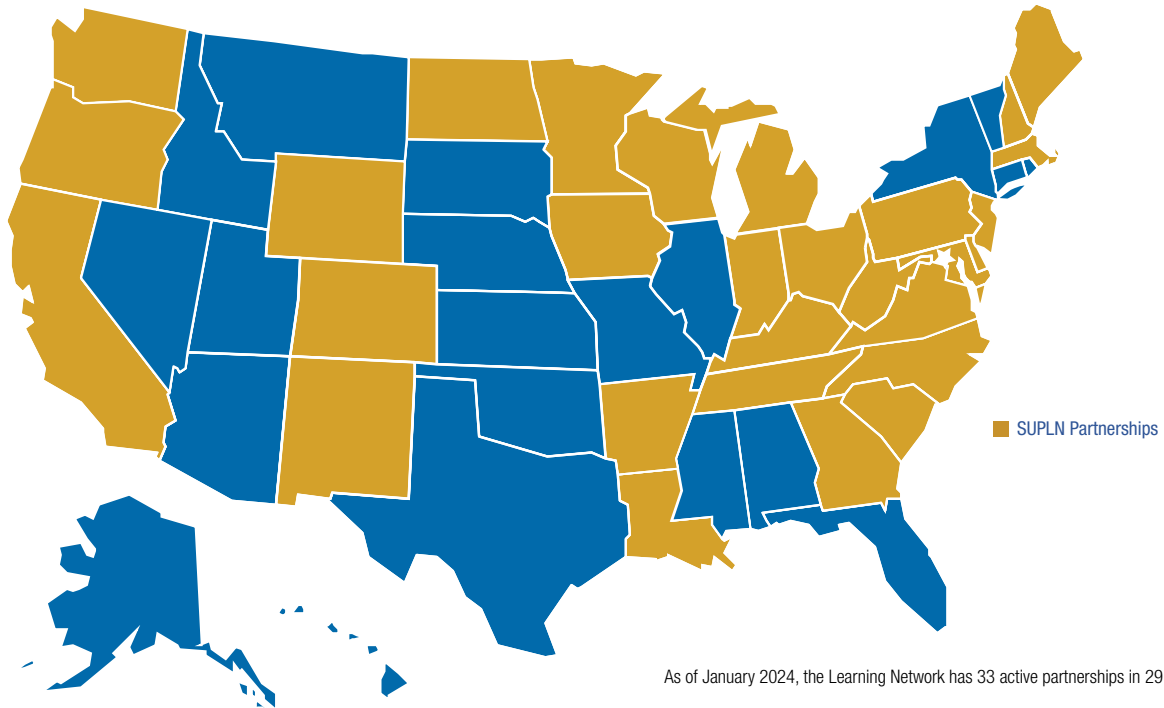


# State-University Partnership Learning Network (SUPLN)

In many states, Medicaid agencies are partnering with research centers at public universities to conduct data-driven policy analysis and support program development, monitoring, and evaluation. These state–university partnerships offer unique advantages as states strive to serve as laboratories of policy innovation and address the many challenges facing Medicaid programs today. In recognition of the often-limited infrastructure to support cross-state collaboration among these state–university partnerships, AcademyHealth launched the State University Partnership Learning Network (SUPLN) in 2014 to serve as a learning collaborative for state-university partnerships across the US.



SUPLN is managed by AcademyHealth’s Evidence-Informed State Health Policy Institute (ESHPI). The SUPLN includes the Medicaid Outcomes Distributed Research Network (MODRN), which was established by several state-university partners to initially conduct cross-state analyses on the escalating opioid crisis. Now, MODRN has expanded to conduct multi-state Medicaid analyses on various topics with a focus on improving quality and equity in healthcare delivery to Medicaid beneficiaries.

## Strengths of SUPLN

- **Trusted Relationship with Shared Vision:** Public universities can be trusted partners for Medicaid agencies. They embrace public service as an integral component of their mission.
- **Expedient and Cost-Effective Contracting:** Many state agencies and public universities can enter into non-competitive interagency agreements.
- **Federal Medicaid Match:** State agencies can take advantage of the federal Medicaid match when partnering with state public universities.
- **Data Science and Advanced Analytic Expertise:** Public universities can support advanced analytics and data linkages across state agencies.
- **Dependability and Historical Knowledge:** Public university research centers offer stability and historical knowledge during state administration transitions.
- **Balances State Health Policy and Agency Needs:** Public university researchers engaged in state partnerships understand how to balance the needs of state agencies with academic rigor.
- **Infrastructure and Other Resources:** Public universities offer expertise in IT infrastructure building, data security, and workforce training.

## SUPLN Research Capabilities

- **Policy/Program Evaluation:** SUPLN researchers lend expertise in program and policy evaluation including but not limited to waiver evaluations.
- **Service Utilization:** SUPLN researchers can measure the utilization of services among Medicaid enrollees in a given state and, in some instances, compare across states.
- **Health Outcomes of Medicaid Enrollees:** SUPLN researchers can conduct outcomes analyses to understand the impact of policies and program benefits on the health of enrollees.
- **Access to and Quality of Care:** SUPLN researchers can investigate enrollees’ access to and quality of care received.
- **Program Spending:** SUPLN researchers can measure program spending and assess impacts on Medicaid enrollee outcomes.
- **Enrollment Trends:** SUPLN researchers can analyze enrollment and eligibility shifts in Medicaid.
- **Provider Payment and Network Adequacy:** SUPLN researchers can explore provider payment and network adequacy.
- **Health Profiles of Medicaid Enrollees:** SUPLN research can assist in understanding who Medicaid serves.

# Benefits of Collaborating with SUPLN

- **Rapid Response Knowledge Sharing:** SUPLN is a network of trusted and responsive state agency staff and university researchers who are knowledgeable about Medicaid-related policies and programs and are eager to share research insights and exchange information.
- **Access to Multi-State Medicaid Research Analyses:** SUPLN's Medicaid Outcomes Distributed Research Network (MODRN) supports evidence-based policymaking with a focus on transforming Medicaid-financed healthcare. MODRN focuses on improving quality and equity in healthcare delivery to Medicaid beneficiaries. Through MODRN, participating SUPLN partners can utilize multi-state Medicaid data to address issues of national public health importance, such as the opioid crisis, while measuring the impact of innovative policies and interventions.

## Cross-State Collaboration and Research Opportunities

SUPLN members work collaboratively to support evidence-based state health policy and practice with a focus on transforming Medicaid-based health care, including addressing health inequities and improving the patient experience, health of populations, and efficiency in health care. AcademyHealth's Evidence-Informed State Health Policy Institute engages the SUPLN for the following projects:

### **Examining the Quality of Opioid Use Disorder Treatment for Medicaid Enrollees**

AcademyHealth's Evidence-Informed State Health Policy Institute, in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh, leverages the Medicaid Outcomes Distributed Research Network to produce a comprehensive assessment of OUD treatment performance in 13 state Medicaid programs.

### **Analysis of Use of Non-Opioid Controlled Substances and Treatment of Non-Opioid Substances Use Disorders Among Medicaid Beneficiaries**

With support from the Medicaid and CHIP Payment & Access Commission, AcademyHealth's Evidence-Informed State Health Policy Institute, in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh, leverages SUPLN and the existing MODRN-OUD project infrastructure to explore the use of non-opioid controlled substances and the treatment of non-opioid substance use disorders.

### **Analyzing Sexually Transmitted Disease Testing in Medicaid Populations**

With support from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Foundation, AcademyHealth's Evidence-Informed State Health Policy Institute, in collaboration with the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, assesses syphilis testing among pregnant Medicaid beneficiaries as well as rates of STI testing of state Medicaid beneficiaries on PrEP.

### **The Role of Homelessness and Supportive Housing in Health Care Disparities among Adults in Medicaid**

With support from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), Rutgers University and the University of Pittsburgh, in collaboration with AcademyHealth, aim to examine the potential of permanent supportive housing programs to mitigate health disparities among Medicaid enrollees experiencing homelessness.

**For more information, visit the [AcademyHealth website](#) or reach out to ESHPI's Senior Director, Susan Kennedy at [Susan.Kennedy@academyhealth.org](mailto:Susan.Kennedy@academyhealth.org).**