

# Streamlining Renewals in Louisiana

CMCS Eligibility Conference

Baltimore, MD

September 7, 2011

Diane Batts, Acting Medicaid Deputy Director



# Incremental Changes in Renewal Processes

- ELE 2010
- Web 2008
- Administrative 2007
- Automated Voice Response 2006
- Telephone 2003
- Aggressive follow up 2001
- Ex parte 2000
- 12 months Continuous Eligibility 1998

# Ex Parte Renewal

- Major policy changes effective 7/1/00—three month moratorium on closures while policy was being written
- Procedures for use in implementing the policy were established
  - Use of SDX, SNAP (Food Stamp), and TANF systems information
- Manager training in new policy, procedures, and expectations for local office practices

# Aggressive Follow-up

- Incorporated into policy and procedures since July 2001
- Efforts to find new address and locate family
  - Other computer systems
  - Internet
  - Schools, medical providers
- Phone calls must be attempted and documented
  - First line supervisors make (& document) attempts as well

Major enrollment losses when discontinued from 7/06 to 11/06 with citizenship workload

# Telephone Renewals

- Federal regulations require annual review but not signed form
- Implemented 11/03 as option when *ex parte* can't be done
- Key to our getting procedural closure rate from above 22% to below 1%
- Aggressive follow up phone calls when paperwork is not received
- Evolved from “cold calls” and follow-up to “time to renew/call me” letters
- Major reduction in administrative cost—postage, paper, staff time
- Families love it!

# Automated Voice Response Renewals

- Families can renew anytime—off-cycle or “rolling” renewals encouraged
- Option available when calling the LaCHIP hotline
- Renewal letters include information on this 24/7 option
- “To renew by phone now, Press 3”
- Data retrieved daily & electronically routed to local eligibility offices
- Voice recognition software integrated in 7/08

# “Administrative” Renewals for Select Cases Since 2007

- Data analysis identified cases with very low likelihood of ineligibility at renewal
- Letter asks them to call if income or HH members has changed
- Unless change is reported eligibility worker does not touch case
- Any eligibility “imperfection” is more than off-set by administrative cost savings
- A smart, efficient and cost effective “administrative tool” for conducting renewals
- Calls are directed to the Customer Service Unit

# Administrative Renewals in Phases

## Phase I July 2007

- Certain LTC Cases
  - Excluded those likely to require worker review:
    - Transfer of resources
    - Those w/a spouse
    - LTC Spend-down
    - Require annual medical decision
- Certain Waiver Cases
- Extended Medicaid
- Medicare Savings Program

## Phase II July 2008

- Relationship other than parent (kin/non-kin caregivers whose income does not count)
- RSDI income
- One parent household with stable unearned income (usually child support)
- No change in eligibility in last 3 years and net income < \$500

## Phase III June 2009

- Children and Family certifications not previously included
- Countable income less than 75% of FPIG
- LTC Spend-down
- LTC couple certifications (both members certified)
- CHIP certifications with less than 75% of the maximum income guideline



# Admin Renewals - What's included

## INCLUDED

- LIFC
- Prohibited AFDC Provisions
- Child Health and Maternal Program
- LaCHIP Phase I and II
- Regular Medically Needy
- Foster Youth
- Extended Medicaid
- Medicare Savings Program
- Some LTC & Waiver

## NOT INCLUDED

- Deemed Eligibles
- Pregnant Woman
- LaCHIP Phase III, IV and V
- Breast and Cervical Cancer
- Spend down MNP
- Express Lane Eligibility
- Family Planning
- Medicaid Purchase Plan
- Disability Medicaid
- Family Opportunity Act
- Low Income Subsidy
- Non Qualified Alien
- Some LTC and Waiver

# Automatic Express Lane Eligibility (ELE) Renewal

- Data match with SNAP file for Medicaid renewals due
- Children with active SNAP case automatically enrolled for 12 more months
- Approximately 14,000 children reenrolled each month
- Lower risk of ineligible case than *ex parte* or administrative renewal

# “Paths” to Renewal in Louisiana

Web: 2%

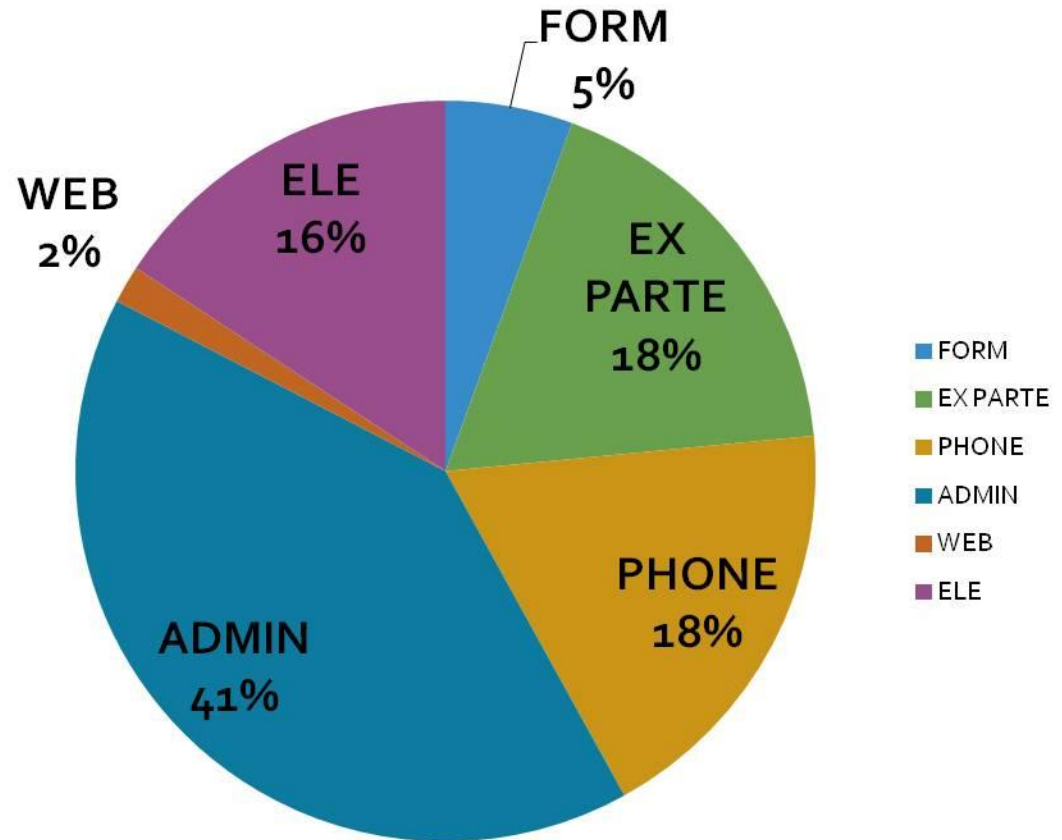
Form: 5%

ELE: 16%

EX PARTE: 18%

PHONE: 18%

ADMIN: 41%

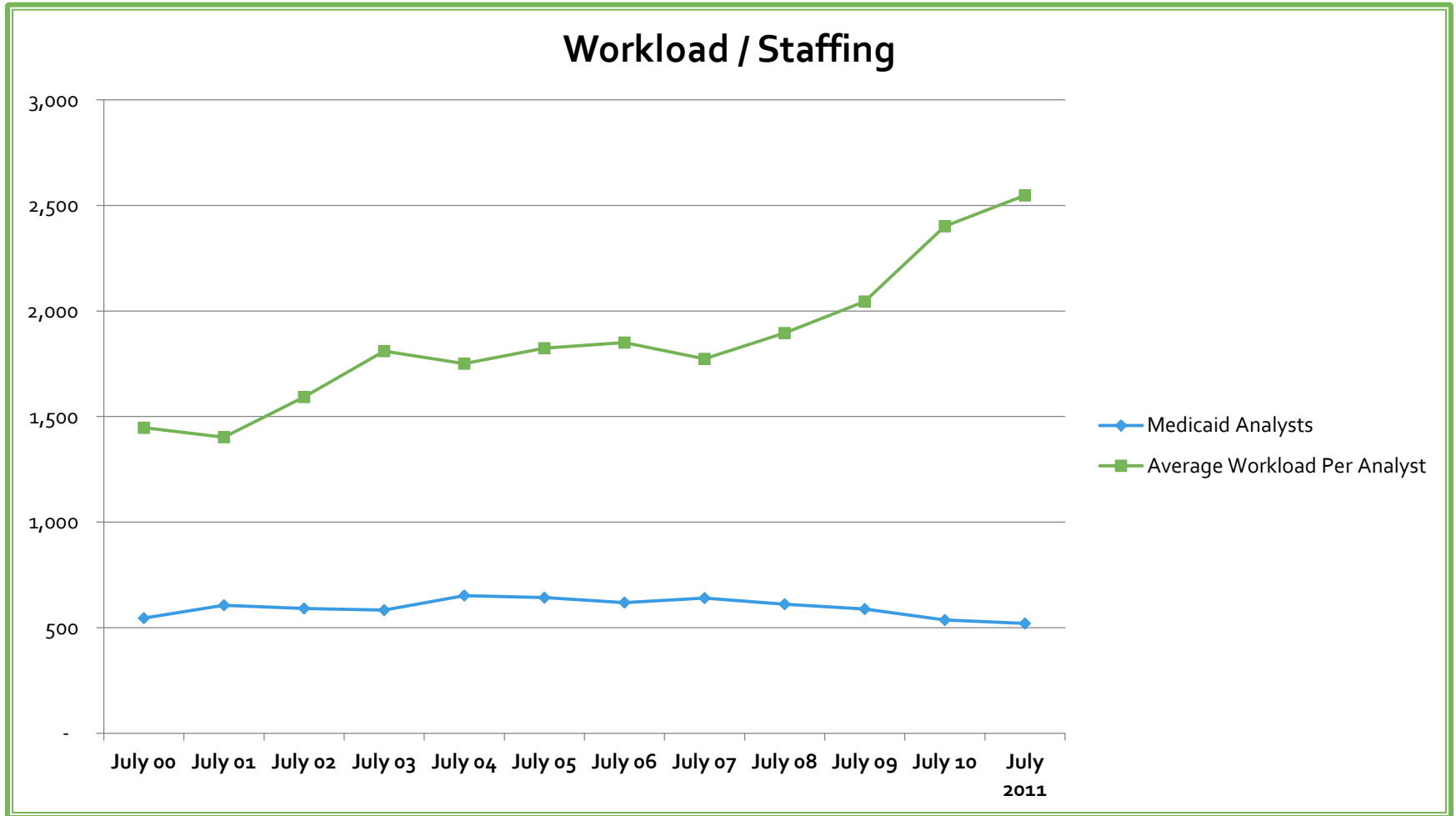


# “Fixing” Renewals Really Does Make a Difference!

51,661 Total Kids—Couldn't renew 501 of them

- 501
  - <1%
  - (2011 Rate)
  
- CHURNERS
  - 10,07822%
  - (2001 Rate)
  
- July 2011

# Eligibility Workload



# “Organizational Change”

## A Major Factor in Simplification

- Even more important than technology
- Caseworkers “open” and “close” the door
- Major changes in expectations of caseworkers
  - From passive
  - To proactive
- Identify work flow problems
- Brainstorm possible solutions
- Test solutions on small scale (to see if it works!)
- Implement improvements
  - Local offices
  - Geographic regions
  - State level

# Ongoing Evaluation of Policies, Procedures and Practices

- Some policies and procedures have unintended consequences, or in retrospect prove to be unnecessary;
  - Example: policy to hold renewals and not close them for procedural reasons until deadline day for closures
- “Best practices” need to be identified, documented and shared with other offices
- Good renewal outcomes by regions and offices deserve acknowledgement and recognition
- Participating in workgroup resulted in greater awareness of the problem (education/training)
- Front-line staff have unique insights and proposed excellent strategies

# Eligibility Policies That Support New Renewal Methods

- Twelve months continuous eligibility
- Signed form not required to renew eligibility
- Eligibility can be renewed anytime (rolling or off-cycle renewal)
- “Call me to renew” letter with no renewal form enclosed
- “Reasonable certainty” verification standard
- Verification not required unless declared income is within 25% of limit



# Lessons Learned from our Eligibility Transformation

- Incremental change is OK
- Make certain people know why
- Focus on administrative as well as health & social benefits
- Empowerment of state government employees pays big dividends
- Don't be afraid to establish high expectations for staff
- Expect initial (and ongoing!) pushback
- It is definitely worth the effort