



Helping States Build Beneficiary Advisory Councils

ALTARUM'S HIGH-TOUCH SUPPORT HELPS STATES MEET CMS REQUIREMENTS, ESTABLISH BACS, AND ELEVATE MEMBER VOICES IN MEDICAID POLICY. KENTUCKY PROVIDES A MODEL.

Challenge: States must recruit and engage Medicaid beneficiaries in new Beneficiary Advisory Councils (BACs), but creating effective councils is complex.

Solution: Altarum partners with states to successfully establish federally compliant BACs, providing a way for Medicaid beneficiaries to meaningfully engage and provide valuable feedback to help shape state Medicaid programs.

Beneficiary Advisory Councils (BACs) are a recent (2024) requirement under the CMS Access Rule, designed to give Medicaid members a formal role in shaping state policies. They center Medicaid members in policy and program design.

When properly implemented, BACs surface insights that states may otherwise miss. The result? More effective and responsive Medicaid programs.

States don't merely want to *launch* BACs: They want to be sure they are effective, and that members can provide meaningful insights. But that can be a heavy lift for already-overwhelmed programs.

Altarum can help.

In Kentucky, Altarum has partnered with the Department for Medicaid Services (DMS) to provide high-touch support that empowers BAC members to actively participate.

From onboarding and program decision-making to meeting facilitation and continuous improvement, our model ensures member voices are heard and valued.

The Challenge for States

States know their programs inside and out, but they often lack direct insight into how members experience those programs. BACs bridge that gap. However, implementation can be difficult. Here's why:

- ▲ **Strict guidelines:** The rule spells out membership requirements, term limits, and how BACs interact with long-standing Medicaid Advisory Councils (MACs).

- ▲ **Ensuring meaningful participation:** Members need support to understand complex Medicaid policies and programs if they are to provide constructive feedback.
- ▲ **Operational hurdles:** States must manage onboarding, educate members, and ensure BAC input is integrated into MAC decisions.

Without the right support, BACs risk becoming a compliance exercise rather than a voice for members and an effective tool for state Medicaid agencies to improve their programs.

Kentucky's Success Story

Kentucky's DMS partnered with Altarum to ensure their BAC members not only attend BAC meetings but are meaningfully engaged and receive the guidance they need:

- ▲ **One-on-one support:** We provide individualized onboarding and support for each BAC member. We gather feedback after every meeting to refine processes and materials.
- ▲ **Meeting logistics and facilitation:** Altarum manages agendas, distributes advance materials, and supports hybrid participation options to ensure each member can engage fully and easily.
- ▲ **Beneficiary communication:** We help members understand complex Medicaid topics by using plain-language materials that meet health literacy standards and comply with ADA/ACA and §508 accessibility requirements.
- ▲ **Coordination with MACs:** Altarum ensures that BAC member feedback is heard and systematically incorporated into MAC discussions. This creates a clear and actionable feedback loop from member experience to policy decisions.
- ▲ **Stakeholder engagement:** We work with DMS to ensure all stakeholders, including state leadership, understand the BAC's progress successes.



Contact Helen Dawson at helen.dawson@altarum.org.

Learn more about our people and our impact at [altarum.org](https://www.altarum.org)

How Altarum Can Help Your State

Altarum acts as an extension of your Medicaid team, offering high-quality staff augmentation to support BAC implementation. We tailor our approach to your program's needs. We provide:

- ▲ **Strategic planning:** Align BAC structure with CMS requirements and state goals.
- ▲ **Member support:** Equip members with tools and context to engage confidently.
- ▲ **Meeting management:** Manage meeting logistics, facilitate discussions, and document outcomes.
- ▲ **Policy integration:** Ensure BAC input is reflected in MAC discussions and DMS Medicaid program and policy decisions.
- ▲ **Promote successes:** Support strategic communications to ensure stakeholder awareness, effective leadership engagement, and showcase state success stories.
- ▲ **Continuous improvement:** Use member feedback to refine processes and materials.

Proven Results

We provide high-quality, high-touch staff augmentation to Medicaid programs, ensuring BAC members have the support they need to effectively handle their responsibilities.

Kentucky offers a replicable model for other states. It demonstrates that Altarum's support results in:

- ▲ **Effective member engagement:** We help BAC members connect complex Medicaid policies to their lived experiences, enabling them to provide feedback that is both personally relevant and policy informed.
- ▲ **More actionable feedback:** DMS receives clear, member-informed recommendations that influence policy decisions.
- ▲ **Compliance confidence:** BAC operations align with CMS Access Rule requirements, including integration with MAC processes.
- ▲ **Sustainability:** Altarum supports smooth leadership transitions and onboarding of new BAC members, preserving group continuity and institutional knowledge.
- ▲ **Accessibility and inclusion:** Materials meet health literacy standards and accessibility requirements (ADA/ACA, §508 compliance).

Partner with Altarum

Altarum is a nonprofit organization that designs and implements solutions to improve the health of individuals with fewer financial resources and populations disenfranchised by the health care system.

Let's talk about how your state can replicate Kentucky's success. Connect with us to explore how Altarum can support your BAC implementation.

Contact Helen Dawson at helen.dawson@altarum.org.

Altarum ensures that BAC members are supported and their feedback is heard and systematically incorporated into Medicaid program decisions, creating a clear and actionable feedback loop from member experience to policy decisions.

