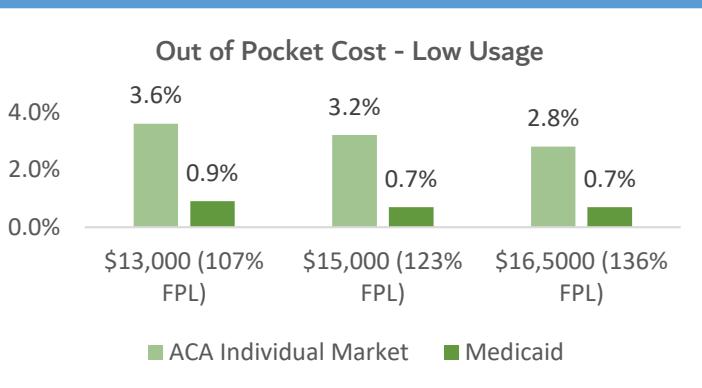


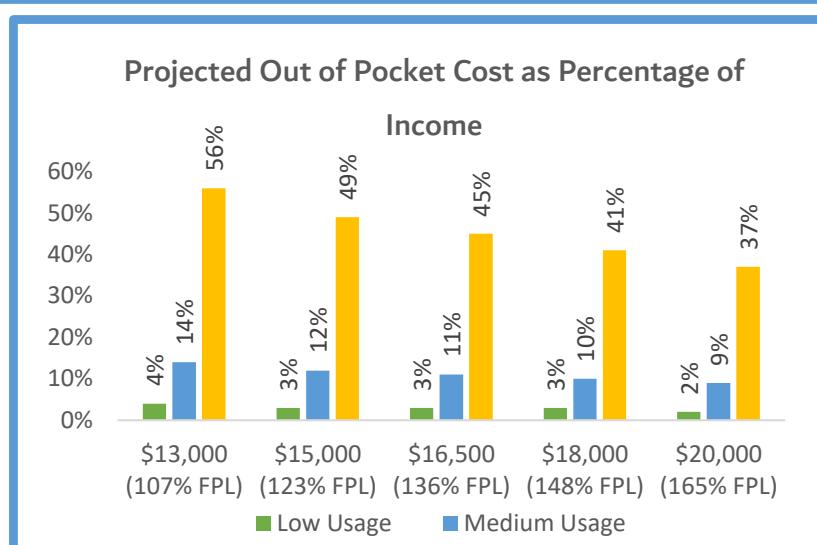
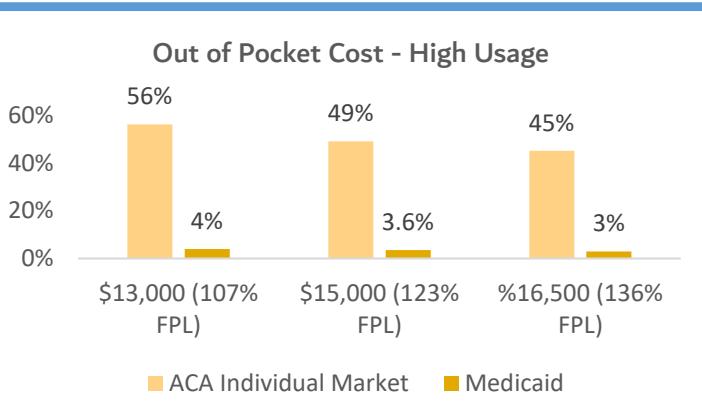
The Impossible Burden of Out of Pocket Costs for Near-Poverty Marketplace Enrollees, and the Benefit of Full Medicaid Expansion

Utah has long resisted full Medicaid expansion, arguing that the state cannot afford it, while low-income Utahns can afford the cost sharing required in the ACA individual marketplace. However, that claim quickly loses steam once you dig deeper into the options available and examine the out of pocket costs.

- Projected expenses vary widely depending on how much physical and mental health care someone needs. **Higher usage = higher costs.**
- Projected expenses eat up a larger portion of pre-tax income for the lowest earners.
- Across usage categories and income levels, **Medicaid is by far the most affordable option** for people near the poverty line.



For the expansion population, there is a **dramatic difference in cost between marketplace and Medicaid**, with low-usage marketplace enrollees paying four-times more, and high-usage enrollees expected to pay up to fifteen-times more per year.



While enrollees nearest the poverty line receive the most generous premium assistance and cost sharing reduction subsidies, they also face the steepest cost sharing burden when viewed as a percentage of income.

Medicaid is uniquely-suited to provide truly-accessible, usable health care to Utahns in the expansion population.

Bottom Line: The individual marketplace is a great option for many Utahns, but for those nearest the poverty line, access to Medicaid is crucial.

Real World Impact: Marcie's Story

Marcie works part-time at Brigham Young University as a secretary. She was diagnosed with Crohn's disease in 2002, and she requires expensive biologic medication and screenings to manage the chronic illness. She is currently earning barely enough to push her over the poverty line, and so she does not qualify for Medicaid. She has an ACA individual marketplace plan, where she has struggled to afford the deductible. Thankfully, she lives with her parents and they can occasionally help her. Without access to Medicaid, Marcie must make difficult decisions with her budget and rely on assistance from family.

