State Grants & School Medicaid: New Opportunity to Advance School Health Services

February 15, 2024
Housekeeping

Webinar is being recorded for those who cannot attend

Ask questions using the Q&A feature; we will have open Q&A at the end
About Healthy Schools Campaign

- Work at the intersection of education, health and equity
- Chicago-focused, but nationally minded
- Advocate for sustainable, sufficient funding for school health services and access, including through Medicaid
Agenda

- **Background on School Medicaid**
  Jessie Mandle, *National Program Director, Healthy Schools Campaign*

- **Overview of CMS State Grant Opportunity**
  Lydia Briggs, *Health Insurance Specialist in the Division of Reimbursement Policy, CMS*
  Andrew Badaracco, *Deputy Director, Division of Reimbursement Policy, CMS*

- **The Role of Advocacy and State Advocacy**
  Laura Guerra-Cardus, *Director of State Medicaid Strategy, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*
  Jen Griffis, *Vice President of Policy & Advocacy, Alaska Children’s Trust*
  Emily Beauregard, *Executive Director, Kentucky Voices for Health*

- **Wrap Up**
Background on School Medicaid
School Health Services: Opportunity & Outcomes

- Strengthen access and equity
- Early identification and intervention
- Reduced absenteeism
- Stronger academic performance
- Health and education benefits, both short- and long-term
Models for Delivering Health Services in Schools

- School-employed Providers
- Telehealth
- Mobile Vans
- Partnerships with Medicaid Providers
What is Medicaid?

- Comprehensive health insurance program
  - Nearly 40 million children are covered by Medicaid or CHIP
  - Almost half of all Medicaid enrollees are children
  - Covers all medically necessary physical and behavioral health services for children

- Shared partnership between state and federal government

- States make decisions about administration, eligibility, services and beneficiary protections

- Changes are made through a state plan amendment (SPA), with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) approval
School Medicaid Services

- Historically, Medicaid paid for health services included in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) of students enrolled in Medicaid

- A 2014 CMS federal policy clarification* expanded coverage to ALL Medicaid-enrolled students

*This is sometimes called the “free care” policy reversal
School Medicaid In Practice

*Medicaid will pay for school-based physical, mental and behavioral health services if:*

- Student is enrolled in Medicaid
- Services provided are covered by the state
- Services are delivered by a qualified provider
- State has implemented appropriate billing, documentation and oversight mechanisms
Why Expand School Medicaid?

- Increase funding for school-based health services
- Fund health services *already* offered in schools and use as an opportunity to cover additional services
- Expand school health workforce eligible for reimbursement
- Encourage new thinking about how schools and the healthcare sector can work together to improve student health outcomes
Expansion of School-Based Medicaid Programs*

*According to HSC’s 2023 analysis. Learn more: bit.ly/state-expansion-status
Momentum for School Medicaid

- COVID, mental health crisis elevated role of school health services
- One-time investments through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER)
- Bipartisan Safer Communities Act included key Medicaid provisions:
  - Update Direct Services and Administrative Claiming Guides for States (2023)
  - Establish federal Technical Assistance Center (2023)
  - Award $50 million for state technical assistance grants (2024)
New Rules for the Road: Updated Guidance

The new school Medicaid guidance encourages states to:

- Take up new flexibilities to reduce administrative burden
- Expand school Medicaid to **all students**
- Cover **all medically-necessary services**
- Cover a **wide array of healthcare providers**
- Strengthen coordination across state Medicaid agencies, state education agencies (SEAs) and school districts/local education agencies (LEAs)

**CMS is actively working with states considering expanding and updating their Medicaid state plan via a state plan amendment (SPA).**
Grants Overview

CMS Will Award Up to 20 State Grants of Up to $2.5 Million Each
- Minimum of 10 grants for the implementation of school Medicaid
- Up to 7 grants for expansion needs
- Up to 3 grants for enhancing school Medicaid

Key Dates in 2024
- Optional Letter of Intent: Feb. 23
- Application deadline: March 25
- Awards announced: July 1

All States Can and Should Apply!
- State Medicaid agency submits application; state education agency is a required partner
- Medicaid encouraged to partner with school districts/LEAs and schools
Alaska’s Political Context

- Perceived Lack of Revenue
- Youth Mental Health Crisis
- Underfunded Public Schools
Alaska’s School Medicaid Context

- Limited to IEP in Statute
- Diverse School Settings
- Community Providers in Schools
Hold Space for the Conversations
Leverage Other Issues
Getting Attention
Remember... You’re the Experts
Next Steps

- Bridge between past and future
- Stakeholder-driven process
- Strengthen partnerships
Thank You

Jen Griffis ~ VP of Policy & Advocacy
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Wrap-up
HSC Resources & Publications

- Status of School Medicaid Expansion: How (and How Many) States Have Taken Action to Increase School Health Access and Funding
- School Medicaid Guidance: What Advocates and State Policymakers Need to Know
- A Guide to Expanding Medicaid-Funded School Health Services
- Healthy Students, Promising Futures: Interactive State Medicaid Map
Contact

For questions or information about this webinar, please contact:

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