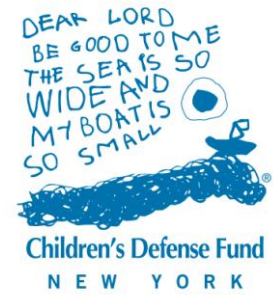


January 21, 2010



Health Provisions in the Executive Budget Affecting Children and Families Applying for Coverage

The Executive Budget was released on January 19, 2010 by Governor Paterson. We were pleased that there were NO proposed cuts to public health insurance eligibility levels or to the critical program simplifications that help families to connect to coverage. We are also grateful that there were NO cuts to the Facilitated Enrollment Program. The following is a summary of the Governor's proposals that will affect children and families enrolling in public health insurance programs.

Child Health Plus

There are NO proposed changes to Child Health Plus eligibility levels and premiums. This demonstrates the state's commitment to ensuring nearly every eligible child has access to affordable and comprehensive coverage. There are, however, changes to documentation requirements and covered services.

- Original identity and citizenship documentation will now be required for children applying for Child Health Plus.
 - This is the same rule that currently exists for Medicaid programs and will be effective July 1, 2010.
 - Undocumented children will not be subject to this new rule.
- Orthodontia services will now be covered under Child Health Plus.

Back End Data Matching

The following proposals will help increase third-party database verification. Such back end data matching will help find and enroll eligible children and alleviate documentation requirements.

- **Express Lane Eligibility:** The budget proposal would give New York the authority to automatically enroll a child in Medicaid or Child Health Plus if they have been found to be eligible for another similar public benefit program such as food stamps, school meals or subsidized child care. The State will now work towards putting the systems in place so that such automatic enrollment is possible.
- **Social Security Numbers:** To help lessen the burden of original identity and citizenship documentation for children, the proposal requires New York to put systems in place that will allow for data matching with Social Security numbers.
- **Tax Data:** The proposal would allow New York to work with the Department of Taxation to verify an applicant's income through tax records. This will give the State another database for checking income.

Elimination of Documentation

The following proposals would eliminate additional documentation requirements that serve as a barrier to enrollment.

- Individuals enrolled in community-based long-term care (not long-term residential care) would be allowed to attest to their income, residency and resources at recertification.
- Documentation would not be required for income generated by interest earnings, so long as that amount does not make them ineligible for coverage.

Early Intervention

We are greatly disappointed by the following proposed changes to the Early Intervention (EI) Program and urge the State Legislature to reject the Governor's proposals. If these changes are to go into effect, New York's most vulnerable children, children under the age of three with physical and developmental delays, are in jeopardy of losing critical services.

- The following is the proposed quarterly fee schedule for parents whose children are enrolled in EI:
 - 251-400% \$45/child/quarter
 - 401-600% \$90/child/quarter
 - 601-700% \$180/child/quarter
 - 701-800% \$270/child/quarter
 - 801-900% \$360/child/quarter
 - 901-1000% \$450/child/quarter
 - 1001% FPL and above: \$540/child/quarter
- Parents will now be required to document their income. If they do not provide the proper documentation parents will be charged the highest amount: \$2,160 a year. This would be cost prohibitive for most families who will be forced to forego services for their children because they were not able to comply with bureaucratic documentation requirements.
- If parents do not pay the required fee, they are given 15 days from the time they receive a late notice, or their child will lose their services. 15 days is not sufficient time to allow for bureaucratic errors and postal delivery timeframes.

Cuts to Preventive Family Programs

The budget proposes a \$6 million cut to the Home Visiting Program. As a result many vulnerable families will no longer have access to one of the most effective early childhood programs. This program can reduce the incidence of abuse and neglect and helps families create more stable and appropriate environments for their children.

The budget also proposes to eliminate the Maternal and Early Childhood Program in its entirety. This program offers critical preventive and educational services to thousands of parents statewide. Offering critical parenting skills and support, the program works to ensure babies and young children have better health outcomes.

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