

## SCHOOL-BASED MEDICAID

### ACTION

Ask your member of Congress to oppose any efforts to institute a block grant or per-capita payment on school-based Medicaid services for children with special needs.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW?

Although Medicaid is a "medical" assistance program, Section 1903 (c) of the Social Security Act was amended in 1988 to allow Medicaid coverage of health-related services provided to children under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The federal Medicaid program encourages states to use funds from their Medicaid program to help pay for certain health care services that are delivered in the schools. A block grant or per-capita allotment system may undermine funding for school-based services.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) authorizes Medicaid reimbursement for some or all of the health-related services provided under IDEA when the services are provided to Medicaid-eligible children; considered medically necessary; delivered and claimed in accordance with all other federal and state regulations; and included in the state plan. In addition, districts can be reimbursed by Medicaid for providing Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Benefits (EPSDT), which provides Medicaid eligible children under age 21 with a broad array of diagnosis and treatment services.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO SAY?

- Reduced funding for Medicaid could result in decreased access to critical health care for many children and youth.
- Cuts in Medicaid funding would require districts to redirect funds from other sources in order to provide services that are mandated under IDEA.
- Districts use Medicaid funding to support the salaries and benefits of the staff who perform eligible services. Sixty-eight percent of districts use Medicaid funding to pay for direct salaries for health professionals who provide services to students. Cuts to Medicaid funding would impact the school district's ability to maintain employment for audiologists and speech-language pathologists, among other specialized instructional support personnel, who ensure students with disabilities and those with a variety of educational needs are able to learn.
- IDEA's static funding levels have forced school districts to rely on Medicaid as a critical funding stream in order to provide the specialized instructional supports that students with disabilities need to be educated with their peers. School districts have to comply with IDEA law and ensure a free and appropriate public education; however, without the support of Medicaid funding, the amount of services available to eligible children would significantly decrease, threatening students' access to essential services.

### ASHA CONTACT:

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