New York State Medicaid Waiver

Building a System of Health Equity for Children

April 2022

The Need

Health inequities begin during pregnancy and early childhood, often leading to chronic health conditions that last throughout a person's lifetime.

The Solution

New York state must build resilient, flexible and integrated health care systems that reduce health disparities and promote health equity beginning with maternal and child health.

Without explicitly addressing the health needs of children, attempts to achieve health equity will fall short.

Children are the largest proportion of New Yorkers to be covered by Medicaid. Medicaid covers:
50% of pregnancies & births
60% of children 0 - 3 years
40% of children 0 - 18 years

Black women in New York are 5 times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than white women and **Black infants are 2 times more likely to die** in the first year of life than white infants

Only 17% of children in New York have a formal developmental screenings to identify developmental delays and disabilities before they enter school

New York ranks 27th of the 50 states for overall child well-being

1. **Youth mental health:** Build stronger partnerships with schools, including primary care & mental health clinics in schools
2. **Two-generation approaches:** Place behavioral health specialists in pediatric and primary care practices
3. **Maternal health:** Provide behavioral and mental health support to pregnant and parenting mothers
4. **Maternal/child coverage:** Provide continuous coverage for children & mothers from 0 - 3
5. **Home visitation:** universal for parents of all newborns
6. **Developmental screenings:** Comprehensive developmental and social-emotional screenings
7. **Household internet:** service and equipment for parents of infants, toddlers & preschoolers

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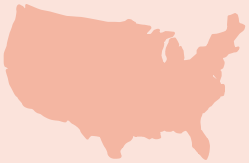
How the Medicaid Waiver Works



Section 115 of the Social Security Act gives the US Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority to approve experimental, pilot or demonstration projects by states to improve their Medicaid programs.

New York is requesting $13.52 billion over 5 years to implement the next significant improvement to Medicaid. This is knows as "the Medicaid Waiver."

EQUITY

The New York State Department of Health has set four goals for this new waiver:

1. Build a more resilient, flexible, and integrated delivery system that reduces health disparities, promotes health equity and supports the delivery of social care
2. Develop and strengthen supportive housing services and alternatives for the homeless and long-term institutional populations
3. Redesign and strengthen system capabilities to improve quality, advance health equity and address workforce shortages
4. Create statewide digital health and telehealth infrastructure

We urge the Department of Health to prioritize children in the Medicaid waiver with emphasis on creating an integrated delivery system to address their mental health needs.

Give Your Support for Prioritizing Child Health Equity

Speak at the May 3rd or May 10th public comment sessions
1:00pm, online
email 1115waivers@health.state.ny.us to request to speak

Submit written comments by May 13th to
1115waivers@health.state.ny.us

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