

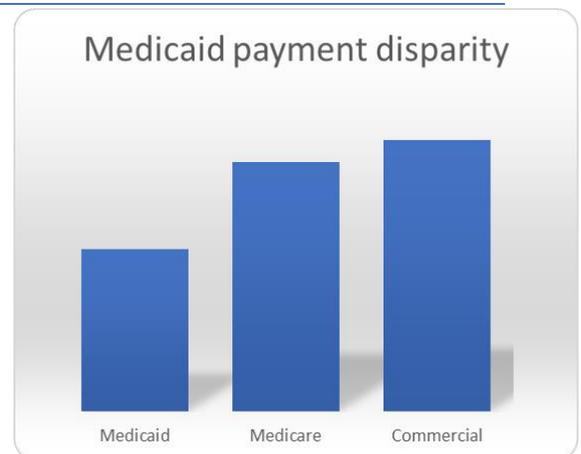
Give children access to timely health care

The Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics supports ensuring timely access to care for all children in Washington by providing adequate funding for Medicaid payment for pediatric care equivalent to Medicare rates.

Issue

In Washington, one out of every two children have Apple Health for Kids insurance coverage, but in many communities, coverage does not lead to access. Currently Medicaid payment for pediatric care is two-thirds of Medicare rates and does not cover the cost to provide care. As a result, clinics throughout the state limit or no longer accept Apple Health for Kids. This makes it difficult for families to access care when their children need it. Bringing Medicaid payment to parity with Medicare rates would yield significant health benefits and cost savings for our Medicaid plan:

- Access to a medical home as a usual source of care for children costs less in the near term and is a sound preventive investment against chronic disease.
- Lack of timely preventive care leads parents to rely on expensive, episodic care in urgent care and emergency rooms, or to delay treatment as their child's condition worsens.
- A child with untreated health problems is more likely to experience cognitive, behavioral or physical disabilities during childhood and to develop chronic health problems as an adult.
- A child with access to a medical home and regular care is more likely to go on to graduate from high school, attend college, and have a higher income as an adult.
- Kids make up half of Medicaid enrollees but account for only 19% of the costs. Preventive primary care keeps kids out of expensive emergency departments and urgent care clinics, and prevents them from developing costly chronic diseases in adulthood.



Legislative Ask

Today, children with private insurance have timely access to cost-effective medical care and children enrolled in Medicaid do not. We can advance health equity and position *all* of Washington's children for a lifetime of health by investing in Medicaid payment for pediatric care that meets Medicare payment levels. *\$24m GFS/year.*



COVER THE COST OF CARE

Medicaid currently pays just **2/3** of the Medicare rate for pediatric care, which doesn't even cover the cost to provide care. For behavioral health care, Medicaid pays even less: \$67 for one hour of counseling, while Medicare pays \$150.

HALF OF OUR STATE'S KIDS

One in every two children in Washington has Apple Health for Kids as their insurance coverage. But coverage doesn't always lead to access. In many communities, clinics have discontinued or limited care for patients on Apple Health for Kids.



KIDS NEED PREVENTIVE CARE

Access to a medical home means kids on Apple Health get the same developmental screenings, immunizations, and vision and hearing screenings that kids on commercial insurance get, keeping them healthy and ready to learn.

LOWER COSTS

Access to a medical home costs less in the near term. Without timely preventive care, parents often rely on expensive episodic care in urgent care clinics and emergency rooms, or delay care as their child's condition worsens.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

Behavioral health issues affect one in five children in a given year, yet 80% of these children do not receive care. Low Medicaid rates are a barrier to behavioral health integration into primary care settings and make it difficult for families to access care.

EARLY CARE IS EFFECTIVE

Childhood interventions are highly effective at lower cost than caring for a chronic disease in adulthood. Timely access to prevention and early intervention services reduces the use of expensive services like emergency departments and hospitalizations.



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