



2012 Agenda

SAFE & HEALTHY FAMILIES

FACT SHEET: Monitor Implementation of Medicaid Managed Care

All children need access to high quality health care in order to maintain optimal health as they grow and develop. Children enrolled in public insurance programs need access to Medicaid providers, which is sometimes difficult if the closest Medicaid provider is located far from where children live. The implementation of Medicaid managed care across Kentucky will affect almost 300,000 low-income children. This change has the potential to increase access to care and improve health outcomes or it could be detrimental to the health of these children.

FACTS:

Managed care aims to reduce costs by coordinating care and ensuring members have a health care home.

In 2011, Kentucky selected three new private managed care companies (CoventryCares of Kentucky, Kentucky Spirit Health Plan, and WellCare of Kentucky) to administer Medicaid and the Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program (KCHIP) statewide. The state also continued its contract with the managed care company Passport to solely administer Medicaid and KCHIP in Jefferson and the 15 surrounding counties as it has done for several years.

Managed care can be a catalyst to or a barrier for children's health outcomes. At this point, the national experience with managed care has been both positive and negative. In some cases, managed care has produced dramatic savings and improved health outcomes. In other cases, the reverse has occurred, and the cost-saving strategies used by managed care companies have compromised the well-being of plan members by making it more difficult to navigate an already complex health care system.

Problems have occurred during managed care implementation in Kentucky. Since the November 1, 2011 launch of this new managed care system, problems have occurred with billing and payment of providers, members not knowing what plan they are assigned to, providers not signing up with all three plans, and children not having access to medications they need. These issues must be resolved soon so children do not experience lapses in coverage and care.

SOLUTION:

Ensure the new managed care system in Kentucky meets children's health needs by measuring outcomes such as KCHIP enrollment and retention rates and advocating for utilization of school based health services, enhanced quality of care, and better access to providers.