

On February 4th, President Obama signed into law the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA). The new law reauthorizes and expands the current state Children's Health Insurance Program to 11 million children. CHIPRA also makes several key policy changes that will impact Health Centers and their operations.

CORE ELEMENTS OF CHIPRA

- Creates a prospective payment system (PPS) for federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) modeled after reimbursement laws currently used for Medicaid.
- Covers an additional 4.1 million children who would otherwise be uninsured.
- Gives states the option to provide timely coverage to legal immigrant children and pregnant women, rather than waiting five years as the prior law required.
- Calls for the development of a model process of interstate coordination of Medicaid/CHIP enrollment and coverage of eligible individuals, including farmworkers and disaster evacuees, in order to insure continuity of coverage.
- Requires dental services as a CHIP benefit and allows FQHCs to enter into a contractual relationship with private practice dental providers for the provision of FQHC services.
- Creates multiple grant programs which FQHCs are eligible for including outreach and enrollment, childhood obesity, quality and health information technology (HIT).

WHAT IS THE IMPLEMENTATION TIME FRAME?

- Most provisions become effective on April 1, 2009. PPS for Health Centers becomes effective on October 1, 2009.

WHAT DO HEALTH CENTERS NEED TO DO TO PREPARE?

- Review the adequacy of your current Medicaid PPS rate and provide feedback to your primary care association (PCA) and NACHC about guidance you would like the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide to the states related to implementing CHIP PPS.
- If interested, prepare your health center to apply for funds available for outreach and enrollment, childhood obesity, quality and HIT.

NACHC RESOURCES FOR HEALTH CENTERS AND PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATIONS

- Contact Dawn McKinney, Director of NACHC's State Affairs Department, for information on state options and requirements of the new law, opportunities for PCAs and health centers, and to provide input on the implementation of PPS. dmckinney@nachc.com or 603.856.7026
- Upcoming Training:
2009 NACHC Policy + Issues Forum, March 24-28, 2009, Washington, D.C.
 - The New CHIP Law: How it Will Affect Health Centers (March 27)*
 - Update on Regulatory and Administrative Policies that Impact Centers (March 28)*
- Check the NACHC website for informational updates, trainings and tools.

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