



CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

A Voice for Washington's Children, Youth & Families

Senate Bill 5093: Health coverage for all children

April 2007

Washington state's children's health coverage law (Senate Bill 5093, adopted in March 2007) will provide affordable, comprehensive health coverage options to all children in Washington State. Beyond coverage, this new law seeks to ensure that children will be able to see a doctor, encourages high quality care through a medical home, invests in outreach to find and enroll eligible families and declares goals for nutrition and exercise in schools. All components are critical to improving the health and wellbeing of Washington children.

Key features of Washington's children's health coverage law:

One unified program – Several health coverage programs are consolidated into a single unified coverage program for children. All children will receive comprehensive coverage, regardless of income or citizenship status. Benefits are comprehensive: medical, dental, vision, and mental health.

No waiting lists – Beginning in July, 2007, all children in families with incomes up to 250% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are eligible. Coverage for children is an entitlement: The state will provide funding to cover all enrolled children. No more caps or waiting lists!

Sliding-scale coverage – At a small cost to the state, families that currently lack affordable coverage options will now have a reasonable means of purchasing comprehensive health coverage for their children. Beginning in January, 2009:

- SCHIP coverage is expanded to children in families making up to 300% of the FPL; families with incomes above 200% of FPL (for a family of four that is \$41,300) will pay a sliding-scale monthly premium.
- Middle-class families (those above 300% FPL) will be able to buy comprehensive coverage from the state at full cost.

Outreach to eligible families – Comprehensive outreach and system linkages will ensure that parents have access to accurate information about available children's health coverage options and the enrollment process.

Cutting the red tape – The application and renewal process will be streamlined through mechanisms such as online applications and retention measures.

Better care through "medical homes" – Quality improvement measures and targeted provider rate increases aim to provide coordinated regular care for children through "medical homes."

Healthy schools – The policy declares goals for nutrition and physical activity standards in K-12 public schools and creates a legislative school health task force to ensure that Washington’s schools are healthy environments for the health and development of children.

The text of SB 5093 can be seen at:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2007-08/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Bills/5093-S2.pdf>

The Children’s Alliance’s detailed summary of the policy is at:

http://childrensalliance.org/4Download/health/SSB_5093_summary.pdf

NOTE: This law takes effect in July 2007.

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