

NATIONAL NEWS

COST SHIFTING TO STATES

Georgetown University's *Center for Children and Families* January 2008 newsletter highlights federal and state policy issues affecting children's health, including looking back at SCHIP in 2007 and looking forward towards 2008. In addition, the report covers the administration rule changes to Medicaid which will have far reaching consequences for low-income individuals.

Rulemaking to enact policy changes previously rejected by Congress is how the Administration is getting congressional enactments such as the DRA (Deficit Reduction Act of 2005) and the CMS Directive of 8/17/07. Costs are being shifted onto states and their already overburdened healthcare systems. These changes will impact critical healthcare access and services.

In reviewing the six new Medicaid regulations which change long-standing rules, it is estimated that they could result in a \$50B reduction in federal Medicaid spending over the next five years. This cost shifting would impact states ability to maintain services or expand coverage. John Dingell (D-Mich) and Tim Murphy (R-PA) have introduced legislation (HR5613) to place a one-year moratorium on the Medicaid regulations. A bipartisan group of senators (Edward Kennedy, D-Mass, John Rockefeller, D-W.VA, Olympia Snowe, R-Maine) also introduced a bill (S2819) to block the Medicaid regulations, including the 8/17 SCHIP Directive. Attention must be focused on educating the community and decision-makers on the impact the directive will have on families enrolled in SCHIP and Medicaid-funded programs.



WHAT'S UP WITH THE NETWORK

The National Covering Kids and Families network continues to grow with new member organizations and individuals joining every month. The efforts of the Membership Committee and network members are applauded for growing our network!

Currently the NCKF network represents over 31 states, 73 or-

ganizations and 134 individuals nationwide. The membership committee is working on generating memberships in states not currently represented in the network.

If you would like to assist with membership recruitment, participate in the Membership Committee. For more information, please see *Committees* on page 3.

WHAT'S UP WITH THE NETWORK (CONTINUED)

Regional Convenings. Please join the *Education Committee* for an *informational* conference call on **April 11, 2008** from **Noon to 1:00PM (PDT)/3:00–4:00PM (EDT)** to learn more about opportunities for NCKF Network members to host a convening in their region. If you are interested in hearing more, please **RSVP by April 10th** to Michelle Wood, Community Health Councils, at michelle@chc-inc.org. Details for the call will be sent to those who RSVP.

The NCKF Network Organizational Operating Principles and Bylaws. At the Annual Meeting in January, members reviewed, discussed and voted upon the acceptance of the organizational operating principles and bylaws. As a result, the Leadership Committee was charged with revising specific areas based upon membership input. We are pleased to provide all members with the final Principles and Bylaws that will guide them on the operations and conduct of the NCKF Network. Efforts were made to give flexibility. We will continue to review and revise as members and the Leadership Committee suggest. For a copy, please visit www.chc-inc.org/ckfNat.cfm.

Get Ready for *Cover the Uninsured Week 2008, April 27-May 3!* It's time to start planning for the sixth annual *Cover the Uninsured Week*. There are many ways to get involved and resources to support activities in your community, including designated regional staff to assist you. For information, visit: <http://covertheuninsured.org/>. Any questions you may have about the Week, feel free to contact Ariane Holm with GMMB at ariane.holm@gmmb.com.

How to be a member spotlight?

If you are looking for an opportunity to highlight or recognize activities in your state or organization or have a solution or resource for Network members, please contact Amy Ellrod with New Hampshire Healthy Kids by the third Thursday of the month.

Amy Ellrod

aellrod@nhhealthykids.com

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Nevada Covering Kids and Families through their Volunteers In Service To America developed a Train the Trainer Program focusing on providing organizations information and resources on Nevada's SCHIP Program (Nevada Check Up). This certificate program is generating organizational commitment to provide application assistance to organizations' clients.

For more information, contact Nancy Whitman at nwhitman@healthinsight.org or www.nvckf.org



COMMITTEES

"Never doubt that a small committed group of people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

Advocacy: Meets the first Friday of the month. For more information on joining this committee, contact Diana Ragbeer with The Children's Trust in Florida diana@thechildrenstrust.org.

Communications: Meets the third Wednesday of the month. For more information on joining this committee, contact Nancy Whitman with Nevada Covering Kids and Families at nwhitman@healthinsight.org.

Education: Meets the third Monday of the month. For more information on joining this committee, contact Michelle Wood with Community Health Councils in California at michelle@chc-inc.org.

Membership: Meets the third Tuesday of the month. For more information on joining this committee, contact Barbara Luksch with Hawai'i Covering Kids at coverkids@aol.com.

RESOURCES

Talk to Other Members! The network has a Yahoo Group for communications. We encourage all of you to join the site to facilitate cross communication among members. You will also find resources and calls to action on network priority issues posted on this site. The Yahoo Group link is: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nationalckfnetwork>. If you have not joined, contact Catherine Sepulveda, Community Health Councils, at catherine@chc-inc.org.

New Report Indicates Medicaid Rules Would Hurt Special Needs Children. First Focus released a new report on Friday about recent regulations proposed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the impact they would have on children with special healthcare needs. To view the report, go to <http://firstfocus.net/pages/3377/>.

Dying for Coverage. State reports on the danger of being uninsured at www.familiesusa.org.

States Moving Forward on Children's Health. A report by Center for Children and Families on review of state efforts over 2006 and 2007. To view report, <http://ccf.georgetown.edu/index/states-moving-forward>

Health coverage for Children and Families in Medicaid and SCHIP: State Efforts Face New Hurdles. A 50-State Update on Eligibility Rules, Enrollment and Renewal Procedures, and Cost-Sharing Practices in Medicaid and SCHIP in 2008 by the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. To read the report, go to http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/7740_ES.pdf.

US House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The Administration's Medicaid Reuglations: State-By-State Impact. <http://oversight.house.gov/documents/20080303111518.pdf>

National Health Law Program. Resources on low-income health law topics. <http://www.healthlaw.org>

Credits: Nancy Whitman, Nevada Covering Kids and Families; Amy Ellrod, New Hampshire Healthy Kids; Diana Cook, Wyoming Department of Health/SCHIP; Caroline Rivas, Community Health Councils/California CKF. Edited by: Janice Taylor, Community Health Councils.