Digging Deep: Medicaid in School Districts

Building data snapshots to improve school health services

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Digging Deep: Medicaid in School Districts

Speakers:

Chelsea Prax directs the Children's Health and Well-Being programs at the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), with a Bachelor's degree in French. Chelsea worked in International Development focused on women's empowerment in Francophone Africa. Chelsea has taught students of all ages in diverse subjects including math, science, English literature, and English as a second language. She earned her license in secondary English with DC's Center for Inspired Teaching, where she has also served as a trainer. A Masters in Public Health from the University of Maryland helped Chelsea transition to her current role supporting AFT affiliates to address children's health, primarily in schools.

Janet Lowe, MA, RN, CNP, is the coordinator of the Third Party Reimbursement program in Saint Paul Public Schools and the district's web based IEP process system. Janet received her Master's degree from the College of St. Catherine and completed her thesis on health care services that are being delivered in Minnesota schools. Janet has published nationally on the processes of Third Party Reimbursement for health care services being provided in schools. Janet was the Minnesota School Nurse Administrator of the Year in 2007, is the special education co-chair for the School Nurse Organization of Minnesota, and is a current member of the State Third Party Leadership committee of the Minnesota Department of Education. Janet received the Governor Dayton's Recognition Award for service on the Special Education Advisory Panel and was the recipient of the March of Dimes School Nurse of the Year in 2012.

Thomas Stinson has been a Registered Nurse since 1996 and has worked in various health care settings. Tom has been a Licensed School Nurse since 1997 and his current position is at Harding High School located in St. Paul. He is also an Adjunct Professor at the University of St. Mary's University. Tom received his Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Bethel University and received both a Master of Education Administration as well as a Doctor of Education from St. Mary's University. Tom has been a Member of the SPFT Negotiation Team since 2008 as well as serving on the Special Education Professional Issues Committee of the SPFT. He is an active volunteer with the Minnesota Federation of Teachers the last eight years and serves on the Program and Policy Council of AFT Healthcare.

Learning Objectives

This session will empower you to:

• Identify commonly available and comparable data points that can be reasonably collected
• Collect data to demonstrate students’ access to services in schools
• Create district-level data snapshots about the role of Medicaid financing in schools

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The Data Project

• A national, 10-item questionnaire to standardize district-level data.
  – Applicable in multiple states and in multiple settings
  – Demographics
  – Student need and access to care
  – Financing
• The project complements growing national and state efforts to expand school health services.
  – Save Medicaid in Schools Coalition
  – Healthy Students, Promising Futures Learning Collaborative

The Data

Reasonable questions to ...
• Identify data that is reasonable
• Demonstrate where additional investments can be made
• Attempt an apples-to-apples comparison between districts

BUILDING THE SNAPSHOT
Data Collection: Strategies

- **Identify sources**
  - District billing lead
  - Special education coordinator
  - Health services/school nursing coordinator
  - District health provider partners, e.g., school-based health center or hospital
  - Health department
  - Local MCOs may have useful data

- **Compile**
  - Pull directly from public databases and reports
  - Leverage relationships and warm introductions
  - Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

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Data Collection: Key steps

- **Use the questionnaire as a guide**
- **Record and track**
  - Data sources
  - Date of the data
  - Any specific nuances
- **Set a date for future collection**

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Data Snapshot: Informational

**State the facts**

- Essential question: What is the role of Medicaid reimbursement in our current student health service model?
- Prepare to do an apples-to-apples comparison with other districts

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1 in 10 students in Chicago Public Schools is enrolled in special education.

6 in 10 students in Chicago Public Schools are eligible for Medicaid.
PUTTING THE DATA TO WORK

Data Snapshot: Narrative

Tell a story to advocate

- Essential question: What is excellent about our current student health service model?
- Highlight the impact and value of existing health services and care providers
- Build a case for the return on investment for additional health services in schools
- Increased federal reimbursement is win-win-win: states, districts and students all benefit from additional resources

"The services Medicaid reimburse are essential for those kids, and we simply can't afford to provide them ourselves."

--Special education teacher, WV

Data Snapshot: Quality improvement

Identify opportunities to improve access

- Essential question: What changes to our current student health service model would maximize access, achieve equity or reduce burden?
- Analyze gaps: Can increased federal Medicaid participation be leveraged?
Working Together

Partner collaboration catalyzes change

• A range of stakeholders support increasing access to school health services
• Unions, health providers, advocates and students can all support district staff using the data snapshot

Thank you!

Next steps
– Collect data and build a snapshot
– Share your findings with AFT: childhealth@aft.org
– Collaborate to advocate and innovate

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