

NAME TAG

National Alliance for Medicaid in Education, Inc
"Takes a Glance"
Volume II, Number 3

May 2006



Providing a network among stakeholders to share information on issues pertinent to Medicaid programs in public education.

"The government solution to a problem is usually as bad as the problem."

-Milton Friedman

Greg Morris, LEAnet coordinator, is an attorney with offices in Michigan and California and is a member of NAME.

More information about LEAnet can be found at the group's web site: www.theleanet.com

New Medicaid Action Group

Excerpts from an article from the New York State School Boards Association, On Board Online, Volume 7, No. 7, April 10, 2006, by Greg Morris

Many school districts depend on federal Medicaid funds to support health related services provided in special education, the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) program, and other health care services delivered in the school setting. The scope of services runs from dental clinics, health screenings, and a wide range of therapeutic services. For many children, their only access to health programs is through the schools, and federal Medicaid dollars help LEAs [local education agencies] offset the cost of providing that access.

In response to perceived threats to school health programs supported by federal Medicaid funds a group of school districts, led by the Los Angeles Unified School District and Baltimore City Public Schools, has formed a loose coalition to share information and coordinate strategy. The group is called **LEAnet**.

The 2005 Deficit Reduction Act, signed by President Bush in February, reduces funding for targeted case management services, imposes additional requirements for third party liability, and imposes nearly insurmountable obstacles to the Medicaid application process for millions of American families, and a potential reduction in the federal match for rehabilitation services. In addition, the 2007 federal budget calls for the complete elimination of federal dollars for school-based administrative outreach and transportation and additional restrictions of TCM. Together, these two initiatives will remove millions of federal Medicaid dollars from school district budgets, negatively affecting the delivery of critical health services to children.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has indicated in discussions with various state Medicaid directors that CMS intends to move forward with cuts without further Congressional action and, in some cases, without formal rulemaking. This would eliminate input from both Congress and the education community.



"As sure as spring will follow the winter, prosperity and economic growth will follow recession."

-Bo Bennett



"Only the wisest and stupidest of men never change."

-Confucius

President's Corner

Spring has definitely arrived in Minnesota. For those of you who live in a year round warm climate, it may be hard for you to understand why we get so excited. The process of watching all of Mother Nature awaken is truly a miracle that happens year after year. No matter how old I get, and I hope I get REALLY old, it never ceases to amaze me.

What does all this sentimental nonsense have to do with Medicaid in Education? It seems to me that currently we are in the throes of winter in the land of Medicaid in Education. The days are short and dismal, the nights are long and dark, and the environment is bleak and frozen. But, just like May in Minnesota, soon Medicaid in Education will be sunny, warm and flourishing. If we can just make it through the winter, and winter always seems longer than it really is, I am sure we will be back to business as usual, very soon.

Make sure you keep yourself informed about the issues and take any actions you believe are appropriate. Then, just keep doing what you do so well.... serving children with disabilities and making a difference in their lives, and the rest will sort out. Enjoy this special time of year!

With warmest regards,

Cathy Griffin, President

NAME Board Meeting Schedule Revised

Given the present circumstances of Medicaid in school settings, the NAME Board of Directors decided to begin meeting on a monthly basis. Meetings during the odd numbered months will continue to focus on the strategic plan including reports from the active committees. Meetings held on the odd months will focus on sharing information and planning efforts related to activity at the federal level that affects states and LEAs in their efforts to access Medicaid revenue.

The NAME Board of Directors meetings are conducted on the second Thursday of the month at the following times:

- 2:00 – 4:00 pm Eastern
- 1:00 – 3:00 pm Central
- Noon – 2:00 pm Mountain
- 11:00 am – 1:00 pm Pacific

NAME members are able to participate in the meetings, but only the Board of Directors may vote on matters before the board. If you are interested in participating in a meeting, please contact Sue Robertson, Board Secretary at 405-522-7269 or sue.robertson@okhca.org.

2006 NAME Board

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Special April Board Meeting

Cathy Griffin, NAME President called for a special meeting of the NAME Board of Directors on April 6th to discuss current and proposed federal initiatives that may or will affect the ability of schools across this country to deliver health care services to children. The meeting began by focusing on the following questions:

- What is NAME's role?
- How do we carry out this role?
- Who are our key partners?
- Who is our target audience?
- What exactly are we "protecting?"

These questions made for impassioned discussion and yet we actually found the answers came with relative ease. The following are some statements summarizing the discussion:

- NAME can provide awareness and build alliances by providing information and facts to dispel myths and showcase the accountability that occurs in the majority of schools.
- NAME will develop communication tools such as white papers, talking points, letter templates, data and analyses of data, and administrative guidelines for use by states and LEAs in developing or revising their Medicaid in schools programs.
- NAME wants to assist to develop better guidance and protocols that will maintain the integrity of the Medicaid program in the context of an educational setting in an effort to meet appropriate standards for all stakeholders and to ensure that children have access to necessary health care services and good health outcomes.

Once we all agreed on our responsibilities as an organization, the next task was to develop a work plan and ask board members to volunteer to take upon themselves significant projects. Currently, board members are:

- Reviewing the Deficit Reduction Act, along with related analyses, to determine the direct impact on children in schools.
- Determining possible implications of the third party liability rule on accessing Medicaid in schools.
- Deciding if/how changes to Target Case Management will affect children in schools.
- Determining how/if NAME will comment on any rule making coming out of CMS related to Medicaid in schools.
- Evaluating the possible repercussions if states revise how they administer EPSDT.

As you can see, we have our work cut out for us. If any of you have completed some of your own analysis, or if you are aware of some excellent pieces, please contact or forward it to your regional board representative or one of the officers.



"Actions speak louder than words but not nearly as often."

-Mark Twain

NAME's Newest Board Members

The NAME Board of Directors recently accepted the resignations from Rita Bouillon, LEA Representative and John Tommasini, Region III Representative. Both Rita and John have accepted new positions within their organizations. The Board would like to congratulate both Rita and John and wish them the best in their new endeavors.

At the March 16th Board Meeting, John Hill, Chair of the Nominating Committee, recommended to the Board that the LEA position be filled by Joseph Greene. The Board unanimously approved the recommendation. Joe is the FTE/Medicaid Administrator for Seminole Public Schools in Sanford, Florida. He has been a member of NAME for two years and he is currently on the Membership Committee, the Finance Committee, and the 2006 Conference Committee. Joe will complete Rita's term which expires at the end of this year. The Board is appreciative of Joe's past contributions as well as his willingness to take on the responsibility to represent the Local Education Agencies across the country. Joe can be contacted at 407-320-0422 or joe_greene@scps.k12.fl.us

The Board of Directors, at the April 11th board meeting, unanimously approved the nominating committee's recommendation for Amy Edwards, Virginia Department of Education, to fill the board seat vacated by John Tommasini. Amy has worked with Medicaid and schools for fourteen years. In 1992, she implemented the Medicaid and school billing program in four Virginia counties and since 1999 has been employed by the Virginia Department of Education as the Medicaid Specialist. She works closely with the Medicaid Agency regarding program issues and she works directly with local school divisions to assist them to enhance their Medicaid billing programs. Amy can be reached at (804) 692-0150 or aedwards@mail.vak12ed.edu

"Journey Through the Crossroads"

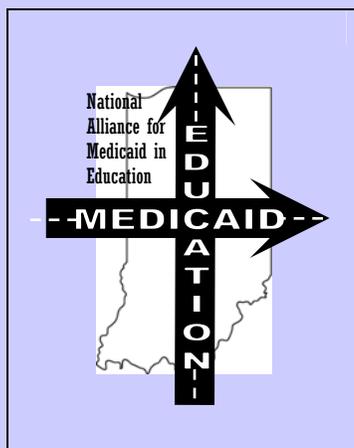
Indianapolis, Indiana

October 4 through October 6, 2006

The plans for the 2006 NAME Conference to be held at the Hyatt Regency in Indianapolis, Indiana are being finalized.

Anticipated general sessions include:

- CMS Panel Presentation – Cost Reporting/Methodology, Services Coverage for SPAs and Administrative Claiming;
- IDEA Update - Bill East with the National Association of State Directors of Special Education;





Conference Co-Chairs:

Teresa Pastore
teresa.pastore@umassmed.edu

John Hill
jhill@doe.state.in.us

Watch the NAME web site for the most current updates.
<http://www.medicaidforeducation.org/>

- Update on activities and initiatives by the LEAnet and the American Association of School Administrators;
- Update on specific medically related activities and services provided by local schools across the nation.

Conference activities will again include the regional round table discussions for each of the 10 CMS regions. This year, attendance at these round table discussions will be limited to state Medicaid agency, state education agency and local education/school employees.

New to this conference will be time set aside for "Town Membership Meetings". Each of the membership groups (State Agency Staff, Local Education/School Staff and Vender/Consultant staff) will meet to discuss and develop an action plan to present to the NAME Board of Directors on how the NAME organization can best meet the various needs of the three groups.

This year's keynote speaker will be Richard Pimentel. Richard is a nationally renowned expert on disability management, rehabilitation, and job retention in the workplace. He speaks from his personal experiences on issues related to disability and people of difference. His message is communicated with humor and conviction. Additionally, "The Music Within," a movie about Richard's life, is in final production and is schedule for release this October.

We anticipate up to nine breakout sessions related to direct services, administrative claiming and current national issues.

Rupert's Kids was chosen as the beneficiary for this year's charity silent auction. Rupert Boneham will provide an overview of Rupert's Kids during the Charity Luncheon on Wednesday, October 4. Many of you will recognize Rupert as voted America's Favorite Survivor from the CBS hit reality TV show. This charity serves youth in the Indianapolis area who have received intensive services in nearly every social service system in the region. Through work programs such as landscaping and home renovation, members of Rupert's Kids learn skills and values that will lead them toward stability in their lives, in housing, employment and relationships.

Visit the NAME website for conference registration information and other conference details: <http://www.medicaidforeducation.org/>

2006 NAME CONFERENCE SPONSORS

NAME is very fortunate to have all eleven of the **Gold Sponsorship** slots for the 2006 annual conference committed.

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We encourage any other individuals or organizations that want to support this conference to consider being a silver sponsor. The cost to be a silver sponsor is \$1,000.

Contact Dann Stevens, of the Iowa Department of Education, at dann.stevens@iowa.gov or (515) 281-8505 if you want to be a silver sponsor or need more information.

