Promote Continuous Medicaid and CHIP Coverage

**Position Brief**

**SUMMARY**
NASN holds the position that promoting continuous and initial Medicaid and State Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage provides health benefits and supports health equity for eligible children and adolescents. The Public Health Emergency (PHE) resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic will end, thus activating Medicaid unwinding. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) informed state health officials that when the PHE ends, states will

- resume normal eligibility and enrollment operations,
- not have authority for other types of disaster relief flexibilities,
- return to pre-pandemic operations across their programs (CMS, 2022).

Students require health insurance to access care that promotes their health, safety, and readiness to learn. Communication from schools about Medicaid unwinding promotes this change in a timely way for students and families.

**RATIONALE**
For children and youth, benefits of Medicaid and CHIP health care insurance include routine healthcare provider visits, dental care, eye exams and prescriptions. Benefits also provide for age-appropriate vaccinations, COVID-19, and seasonal flu vaccinations. Emergency care and hospital visits, as well as essential mental and behavioral health services for children and teens up to at least age 19 are also covered (CMS, n.d.).

Loss of Medicaid and CHIP health coverage is predicted for about 5.3 million children and 4.7 million adults ages 18-34, with about one-third being Latino (4.6 million) and 15 percent (2.2 million) who are Black (ASPE, 2022). A concerted effort to make families aware of the potential for loss of health insurance coverage is vital for student health and wellbeing.

School nurses promote health care access for students. Providing information about Medicaid unwinding and reminding families to update their contact information with Medicaid will enable them to respond to communication from the state Medicaid office during this unwinding. Lack of health care coverage is a health equity concern for students. Healthy students learn better.

**REFERENCES**

Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Office of Health Policy. (2022). Unwinding the Medicaid continuous enrollment provision: Projected enrollment effects and policy approaches. [Issue Brief]. Author. [https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/60f0ac74ee06eb578d30b0f39ac94323/aspe-end-mcaid-continuous-coverage.pdf](https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/60f0ac74ee06eb578d30b0f39ac94323/aspe-end-mcaid-continuous-coverage.pdf)


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“To optimize student health, safety and learning, it is the position of the National Association of School Nurses that a professional registered school nurse is present in every school all day, every day.”

Position briefs shall be reviewed every 18 months. Position briefs renewed for an additional cycle must be considered for development as a position statement.