



Keep Medicaid Strong for Children

The **Pediatric Policy Council (PPC)**, representing thousands of academic pediatricians across the country, is dedicated to advocating for increased access to care for the nation's children. Medicaid is a critical program for millions of low-income children and children with special healthcare needs. Ensuring that Medicaid provider payments will ensure greater access to quality care for children under Medicaid.

Low payment leads to access challenges.

- Because a large percentage of Medicaid patients are children, pediatricians often provide care for a significant portion of Medicaid patients in a community. Unfortunately, Medicaid has historically paid well below Medicare and commercial rates for the same services.
- Low Medicaid payments impede the ability of pediatricians to accept more Medicaid patients and create unnecessary access barriers for children enrolled in the Medicaid program.
- As a national average, a pediatrician treating a child who is on Medicaid receives only 70% of what is paid to treat a Medicare enrollee.

Extending Medicaid equity will help pediatricians meet the needs of children.

- The Medicaid payment equity provision expired on December 31, 2014. Currently, only 15 states have chosen to continue reimbursing Medicaid at Medicare rates out of their own budgets. The provision would have set Medicaid reimbursement rates equal to Medicare rates nationally.
- A recent survey found that 42.6% of pediatricians reported needing to halt or decrease their Medicaid patient load after the payment increase expired.
- In order for children's access to Medicaid services to be strengthened and sustained, Medicaid equity must be extended.

Congress must continue to work to extend Medicaid equity.

- The *Ensuring Access to Primary Care for Women and Children Act* (S. 737/H.R. 2253) would extend the Medicaid payment increase for an additional two years following enactment.

PPC Urges Congress to:

- Extend Medicaid parity. Children depend on Medicaid to work well and pediatricians depend on Medicaid to adequately finance their work.
- Please co-sponsor S. 737/H.R. 2253.

