

HB 141/ SB 2436 CONTRACEPTIVE COVERAGE IN CHIP

Texas is one of just two states in the nation that does not fully cover birth control in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

HB 141 and SB 2436 would add contraception as a covered benefit in CHIP. Parental consent would be required for minors, and the program would not cover abortion-inducing drugs.

The Legislative Budget Board has estimated that this policy would produce cost savings to the state that could become significant. These cost savings would occur:

- By taking advantage of CHIP's Enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (EFMAP), which would cover 76.25% of the cost of services in FY 23 and 72% in FY 24. Currently, CHIP patients are directed to the Family Planning program, which is 100% funded by state General Revenue.
- By preventing Medicaid costs associated with unintended births to teens on CHIP; as well as coverage of their children in Medicaid.

Based on conservative estimates, these cost savings could quickly reach millions of dollars in General Revenue.

Of teens enrolled in CHIP in FY 18, almost 1,600 experienced a documented pregnancy by the next year. These pregnancies are covered by Medicaid, and the infants also are Medicaid-eligible.

While contraception technically is covered for medical reasons in CHIP, many clinicians who prescribe birth control to CHIP patients for medical issues such as endometriosis or anemia struggle to get important medication covered.

BIRTHS TO TEENS ON CHIP

1,592

teens enrolled in Texas CHIP in FY 18 had a documented pregnancy by the next year.

72%

of costs associated with adding contraception to CHIP would be covered by federal funds in FY 24,

Source: Texas Campaign analysis of HHSC data

ONE CLINICIAN'S STORY

My 12 year old patient went to the emergency room for heavy menstrual bleeding. She was anemic, but at the time she did not need hospital admission or transfusion. Instead, the ER gave her a prescription for birth control, which is standard practice to control heavy bleeding. Because it was on the weekend and the prescription came from the ER, prior authorization was not able to be attained and CHIP wouldn't cover the prescription. CHIP does cover birth control with medical indication, but that involves work by the medical staff to make sure that they get correct paperwork done.

My patient continued to bleed, ended up back in the ER and now her hemoglobin was so low that she required admission and a blood transfusion. This is a medication that is not expensive and should not require a prior authorization. My patient could have avoided an expensive and traumatic hospital admission with basic coverage of birth control.