

Nurse Home Visitation Medicaid Option

December 2009



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What it Means for Children and Families in Washington

Washington stands to gain \$7.6 million over 5 years and \$20.4 million over 10 years in additional federal Medicaid funding for nurse home visitation services under the Nurse Home Visitation Medicaid Option in Section 1713 of the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962).

What is the Nurse Home Visitation Medicaid Option?

Washington's Medicaid program currently covers voluntary nurse home visitation services that provide Medicaid enrollees with prenatal and postnatal health services, assistance with necessary health, educational and social support, and life course development assistance to help families become economically self-sufficient. Although Medicaid covers most home visitation services performed by nurses through several different categories of service (including Targeted Case Management, Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT), and Family Planning), in practice States find it administratively burdensome to seek Medicaid reimbursement through multiple categories. As a result, States that cover nurse home visitation in their Medicaid programs often elect to seek Medicaid reimbursement for only the subset of nurse services that fit into one category. The voluntary Medicaid Option corrects this problem by grouping all Medicaid-reimbursable nurse home visitation services into a new category that States may use to cover the full range of nurse home visitation services for first-time, Medicaid-eligible pregnant women and their infants through age 2.

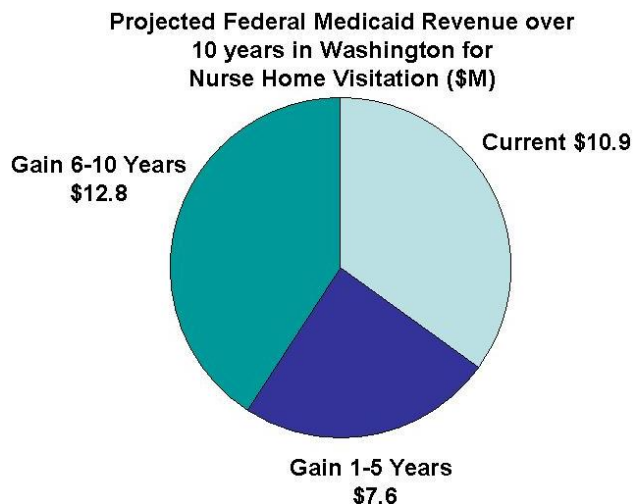
Are Nurse Home Visitation Services Offered to Children & Families in Washington?

For the past ten years, the Nurse-Family Partnership programs have served pregnant women and families in Washington through the respective local public health departments in the following 9 counties: Clark, Jefferson, King, Mason, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Spokane, and Thurston. In Yakima County, Nurse-Family Partnership is operated by Yakima Memorial Hospital and the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic. To date, Nurse-Family Partnership has served over 2,300 families statewide, and all Nurse-Family Partnership agencies receive some Medicaid reimbursement. Through Enhanced First Steps and First Steps, other nurse home visitation programs also serve children and families in Washington.

What Additional Federal Medicaid Funding Could Washington Receive from Section 1713?

If Washington elected to provide services under the Option, the State could potentially receive the following additional funds for services currently funded through State, local and other sources:

- **Subject to availability of State and local matching funds, Section 1713 could provide Washington with \$7.6 million over 5 years and \$20.4 million over 10 years in additional federal Medicaid funds for nurse home visitation services.**
- The projected dollar amounts almost double the federal Medicaid funds that Washington could receive for nurse home visitation compared with current Medicaid reimbursement rates, estimated at \$10.9 million over 10 years.



- These projections are based on a conservative projected increase from 1,000 mothers enrolled in 2009 to 1,510 mothers enrolled in 2019.
- With more aggressive enrollment of families to reach 15% of Medicaid births statewide, or nearly 6,000 mothers and children, the Medicaid Option would produce nearly \$12 million annually in additional federal Medicaid funds for nurse home visitation services.

Assumptions

1. Funding estimates are based on enrollment and cost projections for nurse home visiting services primarily provided by Nurse-Family Partnership. A range of other nurse home visiting programs may be eligible providers under the Medicaid Option, including the many nurse home visiting programs offered through State and local health departments.
2. State estimates are based on current State enrollment figures and growth projections based on the Congressional Budget Office's target Medicaid expenditures of \$800 million over 10 years for Section 1713.
3. A more generous estimate of additional federal Medicaid funding that is potentially available to States through this provision is also provided, based on more aggressive enrollment of 15% of Medicaid live births statewide. At that enrollment rate, 59% of Medicaid first-borns would be offered nurse home visiting services. Approximately 40% of Medicaid births are first births.
4. Projections of additional federal Medicaid reimbursement estimate that Medicaid will cover 65% of costs, which is higher than the percentage of costs currently covered by Medicaid in any State. Estimates of existing reimbursement rates are based on individual State estimates where available or a State average based on available data.
5. Enrollment estimates are based on the number of live births by state in 2006 and the percentage of births covered by Medicaid in 2003 (the most recent year available).
6. National average prices were adjusted to state estimates using the ACCRA price index – all items. (See US Statistical Abstract, Census Bureau.)

Source: Ted R. Miller, Ph.D., Pacific Institute for Research & Evaluation, Calverton, MD.