

Children's Special Health Services

OVERVIEW

What is it?

Children's Special Health Services is a program designed to provide health care for children with special health needs. There are two main components to this program: 1) a network of specialty clinics that provides diagnostic evaluations and treatment; and 2) reimbursement for certain medical services not covered by Medicaid.

Who is it for?

Clinics provide diagnostic services to children regardless of family income and may provide treatment services to children on a sliding fee scale. Reimbursement services are limited to Medicaid-eligible children with certain chronic medical conditions that may affect growth and development.

Where are applications taken?

There are no specific applications for clinic visits, but appointments may be necessary, depending on the individual clinic. There are applications to obtain reimbursement for services. These applications may be completed by staff at local health departments or by physicians rostered by the program. A rostered physician is a doctor who has been certified by the state to participate in the program.

INTRODUCTION

The Children's Special Health Services program provides health care to eligible children under age 21 who have certain chronic medical problems that could keep them from growing and developing normally. The program has two main components: one is a network of specialty clinics that provides diagnostic evaluations and treatment. The other component provides reimbursement for certain medical services not covered by Medicaid for Medicaid-eligible children.

BENEFITS/ SERVICES

Specialty Clinics

The following types of clinics are supported by CSHS:

- Cardiology
- Chronic Pulmonary Disease
- Myelodysplasia
- Neurology
- Neuromuscular
- Orthopedic
- Speech and Hearing

The clinics are held at sites such as health departments, medical centers, developmental evaluation centers, and private physicians' offices. Local health departments and physicians rostered by the program should be able to provide information and a referral for eligible children.

Reimbursement for Certain Medical Services

The program provides funds for certain health care services not covered by Medicaid, including durable medical equipment, over-the-counter drugs, supplies, formula, nursing visits, and limited orthodontic care. A wider array of services, including hospitalizations, surgery, physician care, laboratory tests, orthotics and prosthetics, is funded for adults with cystic fibrosis and children approved for post-adoption coverage. *However, the Children's Special Health Services program does not pay for services until all other payment sources have been exhausted.*

Auxiliary Programs and Services

CSHS offers the programs and services described below:

- The community transition coordinator program has nurses and social workers in major medical centers to identify children with or at risk for chronic illness and/or developmental disabilities in order to ensure the seamless receipt of services upon release from the hospital.
- Children who are deemed eligible for SSI benefits are referred to local care coordination services.
- The child care resource and referral service provides training to child care providers and maintains a hotline to respond to requests concerning child care for children with special needs.
- Local Parent-to-Parent programs receive limited funding as well as technical assistance through a statewide resource and referral center.
- Health care providers are trained in assessment and intervention skills to work with the families of children birth to age three who are at risk for or are diagnosed with developmental delay.
- The assistive technology program assists with the purchase of durable medical equipment.
- The NC Hemophilia Assistance plan pays for a limited amount of care related to coagulation disorders that is not covered by other third party payers.

APPLICATIONS

The specific application process varies from service to service. Typically, a family can apply for reimbursement assistance at a local health department or through a participating "rostered" physician's office. There are no applications required to obtain services through the network of specialty clinics.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility for services is based on several factors, including the medical needs of the child and the types of services sought. In general, the child must be under 21 years of age and a state resident. There are no resource restrictions in this program.

CSHS covers children with any of a broad array of conditions, including:

- Birth defects and congenital anomalies,
- Chronic illnesses,
- Physical disabilities, and
- Visual, hearing and speech impairments.

The other eligibility criteria vary, depending on the types of services that the child/adult needs.

- *Specialty Clinics.* Children who are NC residents can receive both diagnostic and treatment services in a specialty clinic. There are no income restrictions for diagnostic or treatment services. However, clinics have the option of providing treatment services at no cost or on the basis of a sliding fee schedule for families with incomes above the federal poverty guidelines.
- *Reimbursement of Services.* In order to qualify for reimbursement of services, children must be eligible for Medicaid (see Chapter 7). Non-Medicaid eligible children approved for special post-adoption coverage by CSHS qualify for reimbursement services if their net income is below the federal poverty guidelines.
- *Auxiliary Programs and Services.* There are no income restrictions for children to participate in the Hemophilia Assistance Plan, the child care resource and referral services, and the community transition coordinator services. Services for adults with cystic fibrosis are based on the federal poverty guidelines. Referral and care coordination are provided to all new SSI recipients less than five years of age, and to recipients ages five through 15 who have conditions covered by the CSHS program.

Children with special needs enrolled in the Infant Toddler program are eligible to have devices purchased with assistive technology funds (see IDEA chapter). To apply for devices purchased with assistive technology funds, the child must be enrolled in early intervention, have the equipment documented in an Individualized Family Service plan, and must be under three years of age. All children with special needs (birth through five) can have access to assistive technology devices that are loaned. These devices are available through a network of seven Early Childhood Assistive Technology Resource Centers located throughout North Carolina.

FEES

Diagnostic and treatment services provided in the specialty clinics are available to all children at or below 100% of the federal poverty level. Clinics may provide treatment services to children above the poverty level at no charge or on the basis of a sliding fee scale (that is based on the family's income).

NUMBER SERVED 9,236 children were served in specialty clinics and 2,507 received reimbursement for the purchase of supplemental care services in SFY 97/98.

APPEAL RIGHTS A parent may appeal a denial of benefits by the CSHS program. In order to appeal, the parent should write and request a "Petition for a Contested Case Hearing" to the following address:

Provider Relations Manager
Purchase of Medical Care Services
PO Box 29602
Raleigh, NC 27626-0602

The parent should explain why he or she believes the benefits should have been covered. This will allow the program to review the denial and determine if any errors were made in processing. The parent will be sent a petition that contains detailed instructions on how to complete the form and where to mail it, in order to obtain a hearing through the Office of Administrative Hearings in the NC Department of Administration.

FINANCING The CSHS program is supported by federal and state funds. In SFY 98, the following funds were spent in North Carolina:

Federal: \$ 3,544,039
State: \$ 16,024,972
Other: \$ 345,859

ADMINISTRATION Children's Special Health Services is administered on the federal level by Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Public Health Services of the US Department of Health and Human Services. The program is administered on the state level by the Women's and Children's Health Section, NC Department of Health and Human Services, and on the local level by county or regional health departments, a variety of private agencies and developmental evaluation centers.

SOURCES OF LAW Federal statute: 42 USC 701, Title V of the Social Security Act
Federal regulations: none
State statute: Appropriations Act
State policy: 10 NCAC 15A, 21F

FOR MORE INFORMATION Women's and Children's Health Section
NC Department of Health and Human Services
PO Box 29597
Raleigh, NC 27626-0597
919-715-3812

Children's Special Health Services Helpline: 1-800-737-3028
CARELINE: 1-800-662-7030