

Children's Defense Fund (CDF)

Universal coverage for children and minimum benefit requirements for children

Organization Description: CDF is a private, non-profit organization that acts as a voice for all children in America. The organization pays particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. CDF's goal is to encourage prevention of potential problems before children become ill or get into trouble.

Proposal Summary: In 2007, CDF launched the Covering All Children campaign, which seeks to expand affordable, quality health insurance coverage to all children. CDF supports expanding health coverage by broadening Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) eligibility for children and parents. It also supports: offering more preventive services; increasing financial support to public health programs; improving data collection on access, utilization and outcomes; and establishing standardized performance indicators.

- **Coverage:** CDF's Covering All Children campaign would combine Medicaid and SCHIP into a single program to insure all children in the U.S. Under the plan, all children in families with incomes below 300 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) would be eligible for the new program, and higher-income children could buy into coverage. Children with incomes below 200 percent FPL would pay no premium or cost-sharing. Pregnant women with incomes below 300 percent FPL would also be eligible for the program. The proposal would streamline program enrollment, and the cost of expanding coverage would be fully paid for by the federal government.
- **Wellness & Prevention:** CDF supports requiring health plans to provide comprehensive coverage of children's health services, including immunizations, early screenings and other preventive health care. Plans should offer specialized health and mental health screening for children with disabilities.
- **Care Coordination:** CDF recommends improving coordination and collaboration among health, education, child welfare, mental health, and other social service agencies that are charged with meeting children's needs.
- **Health Information Technology (IT):** CDF recommends using health IT to collect, track, and report data on health care access, utilization, and outcomes by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and primary language. To do so, CDF supports expanding existing data resources and develop a coordinated information system.
- **Quality:** CDF supports establishing standardized performance indicators to measure quality of health care and set minimum standards for patient care. CDF recommends developing uniform guidelines for diagnosis and treatment.
- **Cost:** CDF supports providing adequate reimbursements for public health programs so that a stable payment system can support an adequate supply of providers to care for children with a wide variety of needs.
- **Other:** CDF seeks to reduce health disparities among infants and children in order to curb future health care costs and help ensure economic security.

Proposal Date: 2006

Source: *Healthy Child Campaign, 2007*, [http://www.childrensdefense.org/site/PageServer?pagename=healthy_child;Improving Children's Health](http://www.childrensdefense.org/site/PageServer?pagename=healthy_child;Improving_Children's_Health),
http://www.childrensdefense.org/site/DocServer/CDF_Improving_Children_s_Health_FINAL.pdf?docID=1781.