
CHAPTER 20: EPSDT HEALTH AND IDEA – RELATED SERVICES

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OVERVIEW**Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT)**

EPSDT is the component of the Louisiana Medicaid Program that provides comprehensive and preventive health care services for children under age 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid. EPSDT services are designed to provide a framework for routine health, mental health and developmental screening of children from birth through age 20 plus evaluation and treatment for illnesses, conditions or disabilities.

IDEA

The coordination of Medicaid with state special education programs and EarlySteps, Louisiana's early intervention system dates from the enactment of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) Public Law 101-476. This legislation was originally passed in 1975 as Public Law 94-142, the Education of the Handicapped Act.

Part B and Part C of IDEA and EPSDT programs have a set of goals in common: to improve health and provide services for children. These programs together create an excellent opportunity to improve coverage and the range of services for children with disabilities.

IDEA Part B

Part B of IDEA mandates that all children three through 21 years of age with disabilities receive a free, appropriate public education within the least restrictive environment.

- The law mandates that public school systems must prepare an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each child eligible under Part B specifying all special education and appropriate health-related services needed by the child to support the child's success in an educational program.
- Related services provided in the educational system must be directly related to the educational goals and objectives identified in the IEP.
- The law specifically prohibited states using Part B funds to pay for services that should be paid for by other federal, state, and local agencies including Medicaid.

Congress added that while the state education agencies are financially responsible for educational services for a Medicaid eligible child with disabilities, state Medicaid agencies remained responsible for the "related services" identified in the child's IEP if they are covered in the state's Medicaid plan, such as speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy.

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The Louisiana Medicaid Program expanded its EPSDT discretionary services in 1988. EPSDT Health Services for Children with Disabilities, hereafter referred to as EPSDT Health Services, are services for children with developmental delays and disabilities in IDEA Part B that are provided by a Local Education Agency (LEA) or local school board. All EPSDT Health Services must be included on the child's individualized education program (IEP) developed by the LEA.

IDEA Part C

IDEA, Part C, is administered by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD). The program in Louisiana is called EarlySteps, and meets the Part C requirements for the State's early intervention system.

EarlySteps provides services to families with infants and toddlers aged birth through two years who have a medical condition likely to result in a developmental delay, or who have developmental delays. Children with delays in cognitive, motor, vision, hearing, communication, social-emotional or adaptive development may be eligible for services. EarlySteps services are designed to improve the family's capacity to enhance their child's development. These services are provided in the child's natural environment, such as the child's home, child care or any other community setting typical for children aged birth through two years. Eligibility for EarlySteps and a child and family's needs to support the child's development are identified on and provided through an Individualized Family Services Plan or IFSP.

OBRA '89

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) changes in Sections 1902 and 1905 of the Medicaid statute greatly expanded EPSDT's role as a financing mechanism of health services for Medicaid eligible children. OBRA '89 added a new required EPSDT services component of "other necessary health, diagnostic, treatment, and other measures needed to ameliorate defects, physical and mental illnesses and conditions discovered by the screening services, whether or not such services are covered under the state Medicaid plan." These EPSDT changes mean that health related services identified in an IEP or IFSP may be reimbursable for a Medicaid enrolled child.

Effective May 1, 2012, KIDMED which was the screening component of EPSDT that provided for medical, vision, and hearing and screening services is no longer in operation. Services previously offered through this program will now be provided through Bayou Health, the new health care delivery model in Louisiana. For children exempt from enrollment in Bayou Health these services shall be provided by their primary care physician.

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Coordinated System of Care – Behavior Health Services

Effective March 1, 2012, Louisiana implemented a comprehensive and coordinated system of care for behavioral health services. School-based behavioral health services were included in the State Plan Amendment and provide a much wider range of services than previously allowed. These services are administered under the authority of the DHH, Office of Behavioral Health in collaboration with Magellan Health Services to ensure adequate service coordination and delivery. For more information on school-based behavioral health services, LEAs should contact Magellan Health Services at www.magellanoflouisiana.com.