

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Kyle Baker 271-2609

SB 235-FN, relative to Medicaid reimbursement to schools for students with medical needs and establishing a home and community based behavioral health services program for children.

Hearing Date: February 21, 2017

Time Opened: 3:30 p.m.

Time Closed: 3:50 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Bradley, Avar, Gray and Fuller Clark

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator Hennessey

Bill Analysis: This bill:

I. Provides that the Medicaid to schools program may be used for reimbursement of services provided to children with medical needs, rather than children with disabilities.

II. Directs the department of health and human services to establish a Medicaid home and community based behavioral health services program for children with severe emotional disturbances.

Sponsors:

Sen. Reagan
Sen. French
Sen. Giuda
Sen. Lasky
Rep. Snow

Sen. Avar
Sen. Fuller Clark
Sen. Gray
Sen. Soucy
Rep. Rosenwald

Sen. Carson
Sen. Gannon
Sen. Innis
Sen. Watters
Rep. Fothergill

Who supports the bill: Sen. Gannon, SD 23; Sen. Sharon Carson, SD 14; Sen. Martha Fuller Clark, SD# 21; Sen. Kevin Avar, SD# 12; Mary Ellen Foley; John DeJoie, Child and Family Services; Mel Hinebauch; Ken Norton, NAMI NH; Judio Hall; Deborah Bruss; Chris Alibrani, NH Childrens Behavioral Health Collaborative; Kathleen Murphy, SAU 90; Bobbie; Janet Stone; Sen. Bette Lasky, SD# 13; Michael Skibbie, Disability Rights Center

Who opposes the bill: Keith Yergau

Who is neutral on the bill: Melissa Nemeth, DHHS; Molly Lynch, DHHS; Erica Ungarelli, DHHS

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Chris Alibrandi – NH Children’s Behavioral Health Coalition

- This bill would expand eligibility for Medicaid reimbursement for children who do not have Special education services. The second part of the bill would also add the NH wraparound system of behavioral health services to the list of Medicaid covered services.
- Children who are Medicaid eligible and have severe behavioral health disorders would be able to get the services that they need.
- There is a fiscal note to this bill but it states that in areas where schools are already offering these programs there is a significant return on investment. Children are staying out of the emergency rooms, staying out of inpatient psychiatric services, not getting expelled or dropping out of school.
- There are a lot of co-occurrences in mental health and substance use disorders. These students would get the services they need for all of the different needs they have.

Kathleen Murphy - SAU 90 Hampton Schools

- Medicaid reimbursement has allowed programs in the school to continue to help students and has reduced the catastrophic care needed by students.
- Increasing the population that the schools can seek reimbursement for would be a great help.
 - o Many students have different medical needs that need nursing care on a daily basis such as students with type 1 diabetes and students that return to school after having surgery.
- Getting students the care they need early on is very important because it allows students to get back in to the “general population” as fast as possible.
- We have students who have lost parents due to the opioid crisis and these students might need some help adjusting to the changes in their life. Providing an increase in services to them would help keep them from falling behind in school.

Sen. Fuller Clark – What age groups would these services be provided.

Murphy – K-12 up to age 18

Bobby (Last name withheld for safety reasons)

- Victim of domestic violence.
- Daughter was also a victim.
- Daughter struggles with severe emotional challenges due to the abuse.
- There were no services available for her daughter and she was forced to surrender her daughter to the state for care.

- Daughter has had inpatients treatments at NH Hospital.
- NAMI NH was able to get her connected to wrap around services that were available through DHHS.
- Without these services her daughter would have ended up in a group home or jail.
- With these services she was able to do better in school and grow her self-confidence.
- Families should not have to jump through hoops to get services.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None

Neutral Information Presented:

John Williams, Erika Ungerelli, Melissa Nemeth – DHHS

- As far as the Medicaid dollars to the schools it is all federal dollars.
- We will need to contact CMS to make sure there are no issues with the federal policy.
- The current law only allows reimbursement for students with an IEP and this bill would expand that to other qualifying services.
- Section 4 deals with the wrap around services

Sen. Bradley – Is this funding in the budget request this year?

Ungerelli – No

Sen. Bradley – What would be the time line for this program to get started.

Ungerelli – About a year to get up and running

Future Action: Ought to Pass

KRB

Date Hearing Report completed: February 27, 2017