



CHILDREN NOW



January 29, 2018

Medi-Cal Children's Health Advisory Panel  
The Department of Health Care Services  
MS 0000 P.O. Box 997413 Sacramento, CA 95814  
[MCHAP@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:MCHAP@dhcs.ca.gov)

Dear MCHAP Members,

The California Children's Health Coverage Coalition—comprised of Children's Defense Fund-California, Children Now, The Children's Partnership, United Ways of California and the California Coverage & Health Initiatives—would like to share with you our preliminary state budget priorities for protecting and improving children's health that we have shared with legislative and administrative staff (attached). The 2018-19 budget offers the Governor and the Legislature an opportunity to make modest investments to ensure eligible children are enrolled in coverage, improve children's access to care, and fund preventive and integrative services to advance children's health outcomes.

In particular, we would draw your attention to the recommendation (#3) to add pediatric preventive health care service codes to the list that would be eligible for supplemental Medi-Cal payments. As part of Proposition 56, the goals of the Medi-Cal supplemental payments were to increase Medi-Cal provider participation and increase access to services. Last year, this Coalition urged the Department to include service codes for pediatric preventive care such as well-child visits, immunizations, and developmental screenings, but these were not ultimately included. In the inaugural year of the supplemental payments, the Department missed an opportunity to realize these Proposition 56 goals for children because the health care billing codes eligible for Supplemental Payments were skewed towards codes that are primarily used for adult populations, rather than prevention-focused services for children.

For the upcoming budget year, the Department indicated that it intends to evaluate the supplemental payments now in effect and will be seeking comments on the service codes for the proposed supplemental payments for the 2018-19 State Budget. Given the unacceptably low utilization of key child-specific preventive care such as developmental screenings and well-child visits, we would request that the MCHAP submit an inquiry to the Department on how Medi-Cal children's populations may be impacted by the supplemental payments, and further consider recommending that the Department examine the current

payments for child-specific preventive care services and to include their those service codes in an update to the supplemental payment schedule.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the MCHAP on this and other budget recommendations benefitting children and would appreciate your engagement in budget investments that could improve children's health care and health outcomes.

Sincerely,  
Children's Defense Fund California  
Children Now  
The Children's Partnership  
United Ways of California  
California Coverage & Health Initiatives