

Title: Washington State Diagnostic and Treatment Funds- Filling the Health Care Gaps

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Background: 15% of children in Washington State have special health care needs. Although the majority of families with children with special health care needs report having insurance, 31.8% report that the insurance is not adequate to cover the needs of their children. Typical gaps include habilitative therapies, glasses, hearing aids, durable medical equipment, dental, mental health services, medical foods, and formulas. The Healthy Starts and Transition (HST) unit in the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) which includes the CSHCN Program, established a fund to help cover those gaps – the Diagnostic and Treatment Funds. CSHCN Coordinators across the state are able to access these funds for medically necessary services for families that meet eligibility requirements. With Medicaid Expansion, however, families were able to access more services not previously covered. As a result, there was a decrease in the use of these funds. HST formed a work group to evaluate use of the Diagnostic Treatment Funds, survey ongoing local needs, revise the policy and procedure manual related to use of the Diagnostic Treatment funds, and conduct training for local CSHCN coordinators on the revised policy and procedures.

Method:

- Formation of a work group to evaluate use of the Diagnostic and Treatment Funds, revise the procedure manual, and provide training
- Review and summarize past use.
- -Survey coordinators on perceived needs
- -Identify previous gaps that are now being met through Medicaid Expansion
- -Revision of the policy and procedure manual
- -Conduct 2 Webinar trainings.

Revision of the manual included addition of tools to help coordinators determine if specific requests met all the eligibility requirements (financial, diagnostic, and medical necessity).

The webinar provided interactive case examples to illustrate the process. The webinar was well received and encouraged CSHCN Coordinators to access the Diagnostic and Treatment Funds to fill new and innovative gaps (such as parent training, educational camps for CSHCN, and music therapy)

Next Steps: Use of the Diagnostic and Treatment Funds following the revisions and trainings will be evaluated. Plans will be to do additional revisions as needed, to continue to fill emerging gaps (financial, services, or therapies), consider coverage for new services, like respite care, and expand the eligibility to cover more families.

