

The Massachusetts School Nurse Organization has filed 4 bills in the House and Senate in the 2-year legislative cycle that started Jan. 2019 related to School-Based Medicaid for nursing services and Postural Screening. Here is a summary of these bills and reasons for filing.

School-Based Medicaid for nursing services

2 Bills related to reimbursement of School-Based Medicaid Claiming funds to school health services programming were filed. They have different titles, but the same language:

SB676, *an Act relative to MassHealth provider reimbursement*, filed by Sen Vinny deMacedo
Assigned to Health Care Finance Committee

HB465, *an Act relative to the reimbursement of school-based care*, filed by Rep. Denise Garlick
Assigned to Committee on Education

In these bills, we are asking that nurse-generated, school-based Medicaid funds be returned directly to School Health Services programming, which may include “behavioral health assessment, case management, health education, social emotional learning and health support, and other related school health services.” These funds are currently returned directly to the municipalities across the Commonwealth, with the exception of regional school districts that have the funds returned directly to them. Beginning in September of 2019, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will have fully amended and put into place their new state School-based Medicaid Plan. This will allow for expanded School-based Medicaid billing for support services provided to Medicaid eligible students in local education agencies (LEAs) by licensed providers, including school nurses.

We support this legislation to return nurse-generated, school-based Medicaid reimbursement funds, directly back to School Health Service programming for the following reasons:

- all school age children in Massachusetts deserve to be healthy, safe and ready to learn
- direct nursing services provided to Medicaid-eligible students will support educational achievement for all students
- every child needs access to a full-time school nurse during the hours they attend school
- education dollars/LEA budgets funding School Health Service programming are dwindling, and School-based Medicaid monies could provide a revenue stream to help support this programming
- 94% of MSNO members support this legislation
- school health services saves \$: for every \$1.00 invested, society saves \$2.20 (Wang et al, 2014, Cost Benefit Study of School Nursing Services, [JAMA Pediatr.](#) 2014 Jul;168(7):642-8).

As of May 31, 2019, the following organizations/individuals have endorsed these bills: Athletic Trainers of Massachusetts; Greater Boston Food Bank; Massachusetts Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance; Massachusetts Nurses Association; Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association; Michael Pistiner, MD.

Postural Screening

2 Bills related to Postural Screening in schools were filed that have the same title and language:

[SB1233](#), *an Act to update postural screening requirements in schools*, filed by Sen Julian Cyr
Assigned to Joint Committee on Public Health

[HB1496](#), *an Act to update postural screening requirements in schools*, filed by Rep Kay Khan
Assigned to Joint Committee on Public Health

In this bill we are asking to decrease the state requirement of postural screening to once for students in grades 6, 7, 8, or 9 from the current requirement to screen all students in grades 5 through 9 (MGL Section 57 of Chapter 71).

We support this legislation to reduce postural screening frequency in schools because:

- Routine postural screening is not recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, *
- Critical time on learning is lost over 5 grades,
- Many parents/guardians opt-out each year,
- Most Primary Care Pediatric Providers oversee postural screening as part of the physical exam,
- School Nurse time is better used for other screenings, such as the universal SBIRT substance use screening in two grades as required by the 2016 STEP Act, and
- 93% of MSNO members polled in December 2018 (42% of all members, 365 school nurses) support filing this postural screening legislation.

There are currently only 7 states, including Massachusetts, that require Postural Screening by law.

As of May 31, 2019, the following organizations/individuals have endorsed the postural screening bills: Athletic Trainers of Massachusetts; Greater Boston Food Bank; Massachusetts Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance; Massachusetts Nurses Association; Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association.

For more information, please contact:

Jenny Gormley, MSNO President, president@msno.org

Carilyn Rains, MSNO Immediate Past President, pastpresident@msno.org

References

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*<https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/RecommendationStatementFinal/adolescent-idiopathic-scoliosis-screening1>