



UnityPoint Health®

2018 Children's Legislative Agenda

Medicaid and hawk-i

Medicaid and hawk-i provide a critical safety net for the health and well-being of Iowa's children. Nearly half of the 617,000 Iowans enrolled in Medicaid and hawk-i are children, yet children account for only 20% of the Medicaid spending. These two programs cover the essential health care needs of two in five children in Iowa. Under Iowa's current Medicaid eligibility structure, combined with employer-based health care plans, 96% of Iowa children have health care coverage.

Compared to uninsured children, those covered by Medicaid and hawk-i are more likely:

- To have better health outcomes as adults
- To have higher school attendance and academic achievement
- To graduate from high school and attend college
- To achieve economic success as an adult through increased wage earnings and contribution to the tax base.

Policy Recommendation: Protect children's health care coverage by opposing any Medicaid cost containment measures that negatively impact children.

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Children's Mental Health

UnityPoint Health supports the development of a comprehensive children's mental health system that incorporates prevention, early identification/intervention and a coordinated treatment response across all systems serving children and families.

Policy Recommendation: Expand funding for programs that support prevention, early identification and early intervention for children's mental health issues.

- Maintain funding for the First Five program, a successful, evidence-based maternal child health program model. Currently, eleven counties in Iowa do not have First Five programs.
- Support the recommendations of the Children's Mental Health & Well-Being Workgroup to continue crisis planning and prevention grant programs.
- Establish a mechanism to coordinate children's mental health funding streams across State departments to improve access to mental health services for all Iowa children.



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Child Protection Center

In 2016 in Iowa, 8,892 children were confirmed as being abused by a parent or caregiver, a 7% increase from the previous year. Iowa's Child Protection Centers (CPCs) provide a nationally accredited service model to assess and treat the medical and emotional needs of these children. Through this multidisciplinary team approach, the CPCs served 3,742 children in FY 2017, an increase of 8%.

This public-private partnership results in coordinated efforts between the Iowa Department of Human Services, local law enforcement agencies, prosecuting attorneys, victim advocates, and medical and mental health professionals serving abused children with a proven savings of \$1,047 per case compared to those communities that do not utilize the CPC model (Shadoin, 2006).

Legislative Request: Maintain the \$1.608 million appropriation for the renewal of the Child Protection Center grant program through the Iowa Department of Public Health to provide specialized medical evaluation and forensic interview expertise in the assessment of abused and neglected children in Iowa.

Legislative Request: Maintain level funding of \$50,000 to support the Child Protection Center satellite program in Mason City to improve access to a center of expertise for children in north central Iowa.

Iowa Poison Control Center (IPCC)

Poisoning is the leading cause of injury death in the United States. While prescription opioid overdose deaths have decreased in Iowa in recent years, heroin overdoses and synthetic opioid overdose deaths are increasing. Calls to the IPCC involving children under six years of age being accidentally exposed to prescription opioids have also increased.

The IPCC receives nearly 40,000 calls annually for immediate treatment advice and assistance in cases of exposure to poisonous or hazardous substances, as well as for drug and poison information. Poison centers save lives and protect the health of Iowans. IPCC experts manage over 85% of calls and provide 24/7 treatment advice and education over the phone so the public can avoid a hospital visit.

This results in an annual net savings to Iowans of more than \$12.5 million. Forty-four percent of IPCC cases are from participants in the Medicaid program, saving \$5.5 million in avoided health care costs to Iowa's Medicaid program.

Legislative Request: Maintain the current \$500,000 state appropriation for the IPCC to provide state matching funds necessary to draw down the maximum federal funding authorized under the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

