

## **Increasing Access to Medicaid Reimbursement for Services Provided by Psychology Interns**

As part of APA's Grants for Internships Program and the Practice Directorate's focus on Medicaid initiatives, the APA Practice and Education Directorates have been collaborating to increase the number of states that allow reimbursement through Medicaid for psychological services. This collaboration is possible through the creation of a position through the APA Grants for Internship Program. Barriers to reimbursement for psychological services provided by both psychologists and doctoral psychology interns in Medicaid were identified. Using a three prong approach, this collaboration focuses on increasing the number of states that allow Medicaid reimbursement for psychological services for independently practicing psychologists and doctoral psychology interns, and also reimbursement for Health and Behavior codes. These three items work in tandem: interns need supervising psychologists, and both groups need to be able to utilize the health and behavior codes that are an essential component of the integrated and coordinated care the Affordable Care Act envisioned.

Because Medicaid is a joint state and federal program, each state has its own unique Medicaid system to navigate. This requires a tailored advocacy approach starting with detailed research into the state's Medicaid regulations and laws, in addition to identifying state level advocates from the SPA with whom the APA team can collaborate. We are also actively researching possibilities for a national strategy that would provide guidance to state Medicaid offices. Additionally, because 80% of Medicaid recipients receive services through managed care delivery systems, it is essential to investigate and work to educate the managed care companies that contract with the states to provide Medicaid services.

We are speaking with many different experts in the field about their experiences with managed care companies: how they function with Medicaid and the legal and programmatic implications for Medicaid regulations and policies when interacting with managed care contracts. We have also reached out to the National Association of Medicaid Directors to share the experiences of Medicaid directors who have used integrated health models involving psychologists and interns.

Intern reimbursement in Medicaid is particularly important because of the intern imbalance and the need for APA accredited internship positions. The APA Grants for Internship Program has helped create more accredited internship positions, but funding streams provided by Medicaid reimbursement for these interns' services will help make these sites sustainable in the long term.

Some of the states where APA has been working on these issues are Washington, DC, Maryland, and North Carolina, in addition to many more in the beginning stages of advocacy. APA has collaborated with the State Psychological Associations in these states to identify the best ways to advocate for increased reimbursement given the specific political, regulatory and legislative landscape in each one.

To learn more about Medicaid reimbursement for interns, or to see what advocacy methods have been successful in different states, please visit APA's advocacy toolkit linked [here](#).

Please let us know if you would be interested in pursuing these efforts in your state.

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