

Improve

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

Tools for Improving Quality of Care for
Children with Special Health Care Needs

Health Plan Checklist

New England SERVE, September 2002

This checklist offers health plans a detailed list of specific policies and operational procedures that can support quality care for children with special health care needs. This list can be used in conjunction with the Shared Responsibilities Family and Primary Care Provider Surveys, providing an organizational context for analyzing survey findings. It can also be used as a set of administrative guidelines for quality improvement.



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Identification

Does the health plan:

- Have a mechanism for identifying a representative sample of children with special health care needs for purposes of quality improvement?
- Have the ability to identify individual children with special health care needs for purposes of monitoring quality of care?
- Have the ability to identify children with special health care needs to determine eligibility for enhanced care coordination or specialized benefits?

Family Collaboration

Does the health plan:

- Have a written policy regarding family collaboration in decision-making about their child's health care?
- Support and facilitate the involvement of families in decision making about their child's health care by providing training to physicians on family collaboration or by providing information on family-centered care to families?
- Have a policy that assures and facilitates family access to their child's medical records?

Have on-going mechanisms that involve members and their families in:

- Health plan policymaking?
- Health plan governance?
- Health plan quality improvement initiatives?
- Health plan day-to-day operations?

Primary Care Services

Does the health plan:

- Assure a choice of primary care providers for children with special health care needs?
- Monitor the adequacy of its primary care provider network with regard to geographic accessibility?
- Have the capacity to identify primary care providers with expertise in the care of children with specific chronic conditions?
- Make this information on primary care provider expertise available to families?
- Provide supports to assist primary care providers to serve children with special health care needs (e.g., training, written information, consultation from pediatric specialists, consultation on social and behavioral issues)?
- Monitor the linguistic needs of its members with regard to primary care services?
- Require all primary care sites to meet ADA criteria?
- Monitor the satisfaction of families of children with special health care needs with primary care services?
- Support primary care providers to assist families in managing a child's psychological or emotional needs?
- Support primary care providers to serve children from culturally diverse backgrounds?

Specialized Medical and Health Services and Equipment

Does the health plan:

- Assure access to a full range of pediatric sub-specialty physicians and other specialized services and providers? (See attached List 1 & List 2)
- Monitor family and primary care provider satisfaction with access to pediatric sub-specialty physicians and other specialized providers?
- Monitor the time members wait for an appointment to see a medical specialist or receive a specialized service or piece of equipment?
- Simplify repeated access to pediatric health service providers, such as nutritionist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech therapist, early intervention and hospice care, for children with ongoing health conditions?
- Simplify repeated access to medical specialists for children with chronic and long-term conditions?
- Provide supports to assure timely communication between medical specialists and primary care providers?
- Monitor the adequacy of the specialty provider network with regard to the linguistic needs of its members?
- Facilitate the purchase and timely replacement of necessary specialized equipment for its members (e.g., wheelchairs, braces, orthotic devices, communication devices, hearing aids, nebulizers, infusion pumps)?
- Monitor the satisfaction of families with medical equipment vendors?
- Simplify access to specialized transportation services?

Behavioral Health & Mental Health Services

Does the health plan:

- Monitor family and provider satisfaction with regard to choice of pediatric or adolescent behavioral and mental health providers?
- Monitor family and provider satisfaction with regard to quality of out-patient behavioral and mental health services?
- Assist families and primary care providers to identify appropriate mental health services?
- Facilitate and support timely communication between primary care providers and behavioral or mental health providers?
- Monitor family satisfaction with in-patient psychiatric care?
- Assure appropriate monitoring and management of medication by a qualified provider?
- Monitor the adequacy of the behavioral and mental health network with regard to linguistic and cultural backgrounds of its members?
- Monitor the adequacy of the behavioral and mental health network with regard to geographic accessibility to its members?
- Have a mechanism for extending behavioral or mental health benefits for children or youth with chronic or long-term conditions?

Care Coordination/Case Management

Does the health plan:

- Encourage or support primary care providers to develop written care plans for children with special health care needs?
- Support primary care providers to participate in the coordination of health services with community agencies including schools?
- Provide designated staff or programs to assist primary care providers to coordinate care for children with special health care needs?
- Require special pediatric training or expertise for case managers or care coordinators assigned to children?
- Increase compensation to primary care providers for enhanced care coordination provided to children with special health needs?
- Assist families in making the best use of their health plan benefits?
- Assist families in getting SSI or other public benefit programs?
- Assist families in accessing community-based health and health-related services?
- Assist families in coordinating their child's health services with his/her school or day care?
- Assist families in coordinating their child's services between health care providers and other community agencies?
- Provide written information to families on parent support services such as parent to parent programs, community-based family services and/or state or federally funded programs?

Plan Administration and Management

Does the health plan:

- Inform families about its member services area?
- Provide benefit advisory or financial counseling services to members?
- Provide a Members Advocate or Ombudsperson to members?
- Inform members about its internal grievance or appeals processes?
- Provide an independent external review process for members?
- Monitor complaints, grievances, and appeals to identify areas of dissatisfaction?
- Use payment approaches for primary care providers that avoid creating financial disincentives for serving children with special health care needs?
- Provide either performance-based or financial incentives to promote early intervention, care coordination and state-of-the-art family-centered care for children with special health care needs?
- Engage in quality improvement efforts focused on children with special health care needs other than asthma?
- Provide specialized communications, health education or other programs specifically designed for families caring for children with special health care needs?
- Provide specialized communications or other programs for clinicians caring for children with special health care needs?

List 1. Pediatric Sub-specialty Physicians or Multidisciplinary Teams

Physicians or Teams	Yes	No
1. Adolescent Medicine		
2. Allergy/Asthma		
3. Anesthesiology		
4. Cardiology		
5. Cystic Fibrosis specialist/team		
6. Dermatology		
7. Developmental/Behavioral Pediatrics		
8. Endocrinology/Diabetes		
9. Gastroenterology		
10. Genetic testing/Counseling		
11. Hematology/Oncology		
12. HIV/AIDS specialist/team		
13. Neonatology		
14. Nephrology		
15. Neurology		
16. Neurosurgery		
17. Ophthalmology		
18. Oral surgery/Oro-facial Anomalies Team		
19. Otolaryngology		
20. Orthopedics		
21. Pulmonary		
22. Pediatric surgery		
23. Radiology		
24. Rheumatology		
25. Sickle Cell Disease specialist/team		
26. Urology		

List 2. Specialized Pediatric Health Services, Equipment & Providers

Services	Yes	No
1. Adaptive equipment (i.e., orthotic devices, communication devices, feeding and bath aids)		
2. Disposable medical supplies (i.e. dressings, catheters, ostomy supplies)		
3. Durable medical equipment (i.e., wheelchairs, braces, hearing aids, nebulizers, infusion pumps)		
4. Early Intervention services		
5. Home nursing services or organizations		
6. Hospice services with pediatric expertise		
7. Hospital(s) specializing in care of children		
8. Nutritionist with pediatric expertise		
9. Nutritional products		
10. Occupational therapist with pediatric expertise		
11. Pediatric dentist or orthodontist		
12. Personal care attendant services		
13. Physical therapist with pediatric experience		
14. Speech therapist with pediatric expertise		