



Children's hospitals provide life-saving care to the most vulnerable young Texans.



The Children's Hospital Association of Texas (CHAT) will continue to advance children's health and well-being by advocating for policies and funding that promote children's access to high-quality, comprehensive health care.

Ensure Medicaid Rates are Appropriate for Children's Hospitals

Any change to Medicaid rates could adversely impact the ability of these facilities to continue to provide complex specialized care to children facing the most serious healthcare challenges.

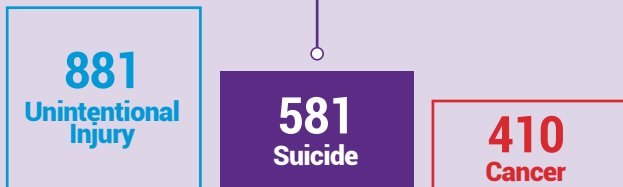
Maintain the children's hospital class definition for Medicaid reimbursement: The Texas Medicaid program has intentionally set high standards for hospitals to meet in order to receive the children's hospital reimbursement rate. Texas Medicaid currently prioritizes this level of care appropriately; and creating a policy loophole does not lead to better care for kids.

Advance Mental Health Care for Children

A cohesive continuum of care, which addresses the lack of services for children facing the most severe mental health issues, is vital to ensuring the long-term health and well-being of children and adolescents in Texas and to preventing issues that may continue into adulthood.

The facts on children and mental health:

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-14¹



Between 2016 and 2020, there was a significant increase in the number of children ages 3-17 diagnosed with:²



Advance Mental Health Care for Children (cont.)

Texas does not have a plan for kids as it pertains to mental health. It is imperative to the well-being of the smallest Texan that the legislature takes the following actions this session:



Create a statewide pediatric mental health strategic plan and conduct a needs assessment: A pediatric-focused strategic plan will create a path for coordinated improvement across systems and in service to children and families. Currently the data to support the number and types of pediatric inpatient mental health beds needed in the state does not currently exist. This analysis is vital to estimate that need over the next 10 years. Understanding the number, types, and locations of services needed across the state will allow for appropriate planning and development to meet the needs both in the near and long term.

Invest in children's hospitals to increase access to mental health services: Many children and adolescents have higher needs than community services can provide. When children are in crisis they need a safe and skilled setting to be diagnosed and stabilized. Children's hospitals report children waiting in emergency rooms for inpatient mental health services for extended times, as well as challenges in meeting urgent needs for inpatient care that far exceed current capacity. The goal of this initiative is to expand capacity through investments in infrastructure at children's hospitals, which creates a rapid increase in:

- **Access to mental health care for all children who need it.**
- **Capacity to treat more children with mental health conditions.**
- **Comprehensive mental health care to protect the health and well-being of children.**

Increase Pediatric Workforce

Invest in programs that empower pediatric healthcare providers: Healthcare and professional recruitment and retention programs can serve as one way to increase the workforce. Specialized care requires ongoing training to ensure that the quality of care we provide is one that is not only current but efficient in practice.

Ensure Medicaid Supplemental Payments are Appropriate for Children's Hospitals

Maintain funding mechanisms for vital Medicaid supplemental payments: Children's hospitals serve a large number of children on Medicaid. The continuity of supplemental Medicaid funding is vital to children's hospitals.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]. [Feb 17, 2022]. Available from URL: www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars.
2. Lebrun-Harris LA, Ghandour RM, Kogan MD, Warren MD. Five-Year Trends in US Children's Health and Well-being, 2016-2020. *JAMA Pediatr.* 2022;176(7):e220056. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2022.0056

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