



Mandated Report: Therapeutic Foster Care



Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission

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Overview

- Congressional request
- Overview of therapeutic foster care
- Medicaid coverage of therapeutic foster care services
- Considerations for a uniform definition
- Potential Commission responses

Congressional Request

- House Committee on Appropriations request
- MACPAC to examine therapeutic foster care:
 - Conduct a review for the development of an operational definition
 - Examine the advantages of a uniform definition
 - Outline a list of potential services to treat mental illness and trauma

Overview of Therapeutic Foster Care

- Therapeutic foster care generally refers to the practice of serving children with serious emotional, behavioral, or medical conditions in a family-based setting
- Despite the lack of a uniform definition, there are some common elements within the practice:
 - Services provided
 - Treatment plan intensity
 - Parent training and payment

Medicaid Coverage of Therapeutic Foster Care Services

- Clinical services considered part of therapeutic foster care can be covered by Medicaid
- States have typically covered these services under:
 - Rehabilitative services
 - Targeted case management
 - Waivers

Considerations for a Uniform Definition: Consistency Across States

- Mandatory benefit would require all states to cover the defined services
- Optional benefit would not require states to cover the defined services
- Obligations under Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT)
- States would continue to define medical necessity and amount, duration, and scope

Considerations for a Uniform Definition: Access and Quality

- Potential avenue for future effectiveness research and data for monitoring access
- Would not address other concerns
 - Recruitment, training, and retention of skilled caregivers
 - Coordination across agencies

Considerations for a Uniform Definition: Potential Unintended Consequences

- May restrict existing state flexibility
- May not meet the unique needs of children receiving therapeutic foster care
- May not adapt to evolving evidence-based practices

Potential Commission Responses

- Recommend that Congress or the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) define therapeutic foster care in Medicaid
- Recommend HHS issue clarifying guidance regarding how therapeutic foster care can be provided using existing authority
- No formal recommendation



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