Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
PolicyLab

Philadelphia Coalition Commends State for Action to Reduce Barriers to Long-Acting Reversible Contraception

Statement from PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, AccessMatters, Public Citizens For Children and Youth (PCCY), The LARC Project, Penn Family Planning and Pregnancy Loss Center, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Penn Medicine and Representative Mary Jo Daley (HD 148 – Montgomery County)

Philadelphia, Pa. – Dec. 1, 2016 – "The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services took a significant step today to improve birth control access for many women in our state by removing barriers to reimbursement for long-acting reversible contraception. Beginning today, Pennsylvania Medicaid will reimburse hospitals for providing long-acting reversible contraception to patients following the birth of a child and increase payment for insertion and removal of these devices in out-patient settings.

"Long-acting reversible contraceptives – small devices placed inside a woman's uterus or under the skin on the arm – are highly effective at preventing pregnancy, can be removed at any time, require no additional maintenance and last up to 12 years, depending on the device. Long-acting reversible contraceptives are significantly more effective at preventing unintended pregnancies than other methods. If more women were to use long-acting reversible contraception, we could prevent unintended pregnancies, which account for half of all pregnancies in Pennsylvania, and ultimately save health care costs and improve women's lives.

"Unfortunately, financial and administrative barriers have prevented access for some women who would prefer - and benefit most from - the use of long-acting reversible contraception over less effective birth control methods. The measures enacted by the state today will reduce some of these barriers by incentivizing more providers to offer and provide long-acting reversible contraceptives, and in a way that is more accessible to Pennsylvania's women. We remain optimistic that the state will take this first step - increasing access to long-acting reversible contraception for the small percentage (28 percent) of Medicaid clients who receive health care through the fee-for-service system – and ensure that it is expanded in short order to the majority of women in Pennsylvania who are on Medicaid and are covered via the Health Choices program.

"While today's changes are bound to have a significant impact on the health of women in our state, there is still more work to be done to ensure all adolescent and adult women who want to use long-acting reversible contraceptives have access to them. We must expand reimbursement for hospitals to provide and insert these devices in all scenarios where a woman could receive them beyond following the birth of a child, including post-miscarriage and ectopic pregnancy. We must also work to ensure all fees are adequately covered in both in- and out-patient settings, from the upfront cost of purchasing and storing the devices to reimbursement for insertion and removal, so that long-acting reversible contraceptives are readily available for those who need them.

"We commend Gov. Wolf's administration for taking these important steps to ensure more Pennsylvania women have access to long-acting reversible contraception, and we look forward to working with the state to reduce the remaining barriers so that all women are able to access the birth control methods that best meet their needs."

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About PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia: PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) is dedicated to achieving optimal child health and well-being by informing program and policy changes through interdisciplinary research. Founded in 2008, PolicyLab is a Center of Emphasis within the CHOP Research Institute, one of the largest pediatric research institutes in the country. With more than 25 highly-regarded faculty and 35 passionate staff who bring expertise from myriad of fields covering health, research and health policy, our work focuses on improving public systems, improving health care delivery and improving child health outcomes. For more information, visit http://www.policylab.chop.edu.

About Children's Hospital of Philadelphia: Children's Hospital of Philadelphia was founded in 1855 as the nation's first pediatric hospital. Through its long-standing commitment to providing exceptional patient care, training new generations of pediatric healthcare professionals and pioneering major research initiatives, Children's Hospital has fostered many discoveries that have benefited children worldwide. Its pediatric research program is among the largest in the country. In addition, its unique family-centered care and public service programs have brought the 535-bed hospital recognition as a leading advocate for children and adolescents. For more information, visit http://www.chop.edu.

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