

Advocating for Medicaid



Medicaid is the public health insurance program for people with low income, including children, some adults, pregnant women, and people with disabilities. There are more than **72 million people**, including more than 37 million children, enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). That is roughly half of all children in the United States.

For children with special healthcare needs, such as pediatric hematology/oncology (PHO) patients, the Medicaid program plays an important role as a safety net program. For example, in many states, a child becomes eligible for Medicaid or CHIP upon receiving a cancer diagnosis. In addition, more than half of the people diagnosed with sickle cell disease are enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP, as well. This program has a profound impact on access to necessary services for PHO patients.

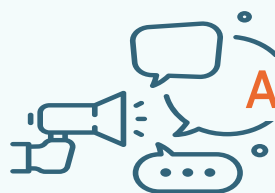
The recent passage of a budget resolution by the House and Senate could lead to sweeping cuts to Medicaid and CHIP. Significant funding cuts could have devastating impacts for the millions of children and families who rely on these programs for healthcare coverage.

Reach Out to Your Members of Congress

Reach out to your members of Congress today and urge them to protect the Medicaid program and not make cuts to or program changes that could impede access to necessary health care for children with cancer or blood disorders. You can reach out to them by phone or email.

By Phone: Call the US Capitol switchboard at 202.224.3121 to be connected to your US representative and senators' offices. You also can find your US representative by visiting [House.gov](https://www.house.gov) and using the "Find Your Representative" feature at the top right of the page. To find your US senators, visit [Senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov) and use the "Find Your Senators" feature at the top left of the page. The contact information for each member's Washington, DC, office is available on their website.

By Email: Email your members of Congress through their websites. You can find your US representative by visiting [House.gov](https://www.house.gov) and using the "Find Your Representative" feature at the top right of the page. To find your US senators, visit [Senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov) and use the "Find Your Senators" feature at the top left of the page. Email your US representative and senators through the contact form on their websites by customizing the talking points below.



Advocacy Tips

Use stories: Personal stories always play an important role in any advocacy efforts. When utilizing these talking points, be sure to make them your own. Using stories from your own experience can be hugely impactful and provides real world information to policy makers that could impact their decisions.

Don't be too technical: Try not to use too much medical terminology. Use plain language or be sure to explain any medical conditions or procedures you discuss. You could risk losing the larger point if policy makers do not understand the language you use.

Remember, you're the expert: ASPHO members have an important role to play in these types of advocacy efforts. Pediatric hematologists/oncologists have the education and training to understand the medical implications of certain policy decisions that are being made and always have the best interest of their patients in mind when making decisions.

Be a resource: Offer to be an ongoing resource if and when policy makers need to consider these types of issues. Developing relationships with legislative offices helps both the pediatrician, the policy maker, and most importantly, your patients.

Talking Points

Medicaid Talking Points

- **Medicaid and CHIP cover more than 37 million children**—almost half of all children in the U.S. These programs are designed for children's unique health needs.
- **Because of Medicaid and CHIP, children can access the care they need to grow up healthy.**
- **Any significant funding cuts to Medicaid and CHIP would harm children's health** and impact their access to care.
- **Our pediatric health system depends on Medicaid** to keep pediatric practices and children's hospitals open.

Hematology/Oncology Specific Issues

- **Pediatric hematology/oncology patients, children with cancer or other blood disorders, have special health care needs** and should always have access to necessary services.
- **Many children with complex needs are only able to receive needed specialty care and supportive services through the Medicaid program.**
- **Research shows** that pediatric patients who experience disruptions in their Medicaid coverage are more likely to have advanced-stage disease and worse survival rates than those without disruptions.
- **Medicaid currently covers more than 4 in 10 children with special health care needs**, while Medicaid is the only source of coverage for 1 in 3 of this same group. An additional 9% of these children have Medicaid to supplement private coverage. (You can also find state specific data on the percentage of children with special health care needs covered by Medicaid using these [2025 Medicaid Fact Sheets](#).)



This resource is also available to subspecialists through our website at <http://aspho.org/knowledge-center/advocacy-brief/health-policy-and-advocacy>.