

To:
 CESAs
 SBS Providers
 HMOs and Other
 Managed Care
 Programs
 School Districts

School-based services transportation coverage changes

Covered transportation

For dates of service on and after July 1, 1999, Wisconsin Medicaid will cover school-based services (SBS) transportation as described in HCFA's *Medicaid and School Health Technical Assistance Guide*. A letter from HCFA summarizes this policy change. The following is an excerpt from that letter:

“The (Medicaid and School Health Technical Assistance) Guide indicates that transportation to and from school may be claimed as a Medicaid service when the child receives a medical service in school on a particular day and when transportation is specifically listed in the Individual Education Program (IEP) as a required service.

“It is our understanding that an IEP should include only specialized services that a child would not otherwise receive in the course of attending school. Therefore, HCFA would like to clarify that a child with special education needs under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) who rides the regular school bus to school with the other non-disabled children in his/her neighborhood should not have transportation listed in his/her IEP and the cost of that bus ride should not be billed to Medicaid.

“If a child requires transportation in a vehicle adapted to serve the needs of the disabled, including a specially adapted school bus, that transportation may be billed to Medicaid if the need for that specialized transportation is identified in the IEP. In addition, if a child resides in an area that does not have school bus transportation (such as those areas in close proximity to a school) but has a medical need for transportation that is noted in the IEP, that transportation may also be billed to Medicaid. As always, transportation from the school to a provider in the community also may be billed to Medicaid.

“When a state claims federal financial participation (FFP) [federal matching dollars] under the Medicaid program for transportation services as medical assistance under an approved reimbursement rate, the requirements for documentation of each service must be maintained for purposes of an audit trail. This usually takes the form of a trip log maintained by the provider of the specialized transportation service. ...

“FFP for IEP-related transportation services will only be available for services provided on or after July 1, 1999, as specified in this letter.”

Required documentation

As indicated in previous Wisconsin Medicaid publications, SBS providers are required to have a system in place to verify that the child was in school receiving another Medicaid-covered SBS service on the same day that SBS transportation services were provided.

Medicaid-certified SBS providers bill for each child's actual miles traveled (e.g., while riding in an adapted school bus, van, or car to accommodate a disabling condition and/or medical need). This includes the miles the vehicle travels from its storage site (e.g., bus barn) to and from the child's home while not carrying the child.

SBS providers may use the child's actual miles traveled to convert the number of miles traveled to billable units (e.g., 1 mile = 1 unit). Providers may thereafter use that number of units (miles) for that child on each day the child receives another Medicaid-covered SBS service. Providers must document this number of units (miles) in the child's record each day the child receives another Medicaid-covered SBS service.

Refer to *Medicaid Update 98-13* for the mileage situations that Wisconsin Medicaid covers when transporting multiple children receiving another Medicaid-covered SBS service on that same day.

If you have questions about this policy change, call Provider Services at (800) 947-9627 or (608) 221-9883.

The Wisconsin Medicaid Update is the first source for provider information including Medicaid policy and billing information.

Wisconsin Medicaid is administered by the Division of Health Care Financing, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, P.O. Box 309, Madison, WI 53701-0309.

For provider questions, call the Medicaid fiscal agent at (800) 947-9627 or (608) 221-9883 or visit our web site at www.dhfs.state.wi.us/medicaid.