



Advocating for Maryland Nurse Practitioners since 1992

3/4/2025

Regarding: HB 1315 Health Insurance – Coverage for Child Wellness Services - Immunizations

Position: **Support**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the committee,

On behalf of the over 860 members of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland, I submit support for **HB 1315**, which aligns with our mission to promote the highest standards of health care delivery. As nurse practitioners, we believe that ensuring vaccines as a covered part of routine wellness visits is crucial for protecting the health of children and communities at large.

This bill integrates the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations into our state's regulations regarding the coverage of vaccines during wellness visits. The AAP provides evidence-based guidelines and best practices to promote optimal pediatric health, including an essential list of vaccines that are crucial to prevent serious illnesses. These vaccines, recommended in line with the AAP's *Immunization Schedule*, serve as a foundation for safeguarding our youth against preventable diseases. This legislation would require the state to adopt the following updates into the wellness visit coverage requirements:

- 1. Full Vaccination Coverage in Line with the AAP Immunization Schedule:**
The state should mandate that health insurers fully cover all recommended vaccines for children during wellness visits without any co-pays or cost-sharing. This includes vaccines for routine childhood diseases, as well as those for preventable illnesses such as influenza, HPV, meningitis, and others.
- 2. Accessibility to Catch-Up Vaccination:**
In cases where a child has missed scheduled vaccinations, the AAP recommends catch-up vaccinations during wellness visits. Ensuring insurance coverage for these catch-up vaccines is vital to prevent disease outbreaks and maintain herd immunity.

3. **Prevention of Out-of-Pocket Costs for Families:**

Many families face financial barriers to accessing healthcare. By ensuring that vaccines are covered under wellness visits without additional costs, we reduce the economic burden and increase vaccine uptake, ultimately reducing preventable health issues.

By adopting the AAP's recommendations, our state will not only align with the best practices for pediatric health, but also ensure that all children have equal access to preventive care through well-structured coverage policies. This step will significantly contribute to reducing vaccine-preventable diseases and overall healthcare costs in the long run.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We respectfully urge a favorable report for **HB 1315 Health Insurance - Coverage for Child Wellness Services - Immunizations** and look forward to the positive impact this change will have on the health of Maryland children and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Malinda D. Duke CRNP-PC". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Malinda D. Duke MS, CRNP-PC, CDCES
Executive Director
Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland
Office: 443-367-0277
Fax: 410-772-7915
NPAMexecdir@gmail.com