



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 23, 2022

Governor signs House Bill 136 to improve Medicaid access to chiropractic services

(Columbus, OH) Ohio Governor Mike DeWine (R) signed House Bill 136, sponsored by Representative Scott Lipps (R, Franklin), into law last week. Effective June 13, 2022, the new law requires the Ohio Department of Medicaid to cover evaluation and management services provided by a chiropractor licensed under Ohio law.

This law will better align Ohio Medicaid's payor policy to state and national best practice guidelines which recommend patients seek conservative care first for the treatment of acute and chronic musculoskeletal conditions, including pain. It requires Medicaid to cover Evaluation/Management (E/M) services when performed by the chiropractic physician, a service already covered by Medicaid when provided by other provider types.

Previously, Ohio Medicaid covered some chiropractic treatments but not the evaluation, which takes place before the patient can initiate care. The Ohio State Chiropractic Association said this was an access issue which created a roadblock, preventing many from receiving any treatment.

The new law also:

- Permits the Medicaid Director to adopt rules to cover other services provided by a chiropractor.
- Prohibits the Medicaid program from imposing a prior authorization requirement on the covered services or making the coverage contingent upon receiving a referral, prescription, or treatment from another licensed health professional.

- Requires the Medicaid program to pay a chiropractor the same amount for a service that it pays another licensed health professional authorized to provide the service.

Dr. Brandy Spaulding, Executive Director of the Ohio State Chiropractic Association (OSCA), testified in support of the bill. She said this new law will ensure the patient's ability to access chiropractic visits already covered by Ohio Medicaid.

"Conservative treatment like chiropractic offers two major benefits: It saves lives by reducing opioid use and abuse and it saves money by offsetting more expensive and invasive treatments," she stated.

About 1 in 4 Ohioans is enrolled in Medicaid. According to a study of all Medicaid agencies, conducted by The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP), the Medicaid population has been prescribed opioids at a disproportionately higher rate than non-Medicaid populations and is also more likely to overdose.

Senator Nickie J. Antonio (D, Lakewood), who supported the bill since its introduction, acknowledged it will reduce barriers to care and reimburse chiropractors for a service that is consistent with standards of care. "We're constantly looking for alternatives to using pain medication. We need everything available to get people on the right track. This bill is a step in the right direction towards providing more options for individuals covered by Medicaid," she said.

For questions, please contact the OSCA office at osca@oscachiro.org