

Lyndon Baines Johnson created Medicaid to help disabled children.

When Medicaid for children was created in 1967, President Lyndon Johnson stated “The problem is to discover, as early as possible, the ills that handicap our children. There must be continuing follow-up and treatment so that handicaps do not go untreated.” (13 Congressional Record 2883, February 8, 1967).

Lyndon Johnson’s original purpose and intent of Medicaid for children was to speed the implementation of new therapies for handicapped, i.e., brain-injured children. This noble goal has never been achieved.

Until now.

Medicaid: Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnostic--and Treatment Services.

Medicaid for children, known as EPSDT, is an acronym for Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment services. Most of the 50 states have been good at implementing EPSD, but ignored the “T” of EPSDT. The reason? Historically over 80% of all therapies prescribed for children are prescribed “off-label”--which means they may not fit the category of “medically necessary”.

Before 1989 the EPSDT statute provided coverage in four areas: screening, vision, hearing, and dental services. However, treatment services were still so abysmal that in 1989 a fifth paragraph was added because states could avoid paying for “Treatment” services if they were “off-label” because those services were technically not “medically necessary.”

The Medicaid Law for Children and Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT).



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