



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

GOV. MALLOY: 'KATIE BECKETT' WAIVER PROGRAM TO SERVE 100 MORE MEDICALLY FRAGILE CHILDREN

(Hartford, CT) – Governor Daniel P. Malloy today announced that Connecticut’s Medicaid program for medically fragile children, known as the Katie Beckett waiver, will be helping up to 100 additional families care for their children at home, instead of a hospital.

“I am proud that the General Assembly approved my proposal to expand this crucial service for families caring for children with significant disabilities,” Governor Malloy said. “The Katie Beckett waiver is unique nationally in serving medically fragile children at home when they would otherwise need a hospital bed or institutional care. In Connecticut, we are ready to increase participation by 50%--to a total of 300 children and young adults.”

Named after an Iowa child who left the hospital for home in the early 1980s, the Katie Beckett waiver program serves children and young adults under 22 years of age whose family income would otherwise be too high to qualify for Medicaid. Because the program has a capped appropriation, there is invariably a waiting list. Governor Malloy’s initiative adds \$1.5 million in fiscal 2015 to begin serving 100 additional children and young adults with severe physical disabilities.

“Simply put, the Katie Beckett waiver gives children who would not ordinarily qualify for Medicaid a better chance to live at home with their families and participate in their communities, instead of living in hospitals and institutions,” the Governor said.

The additional funding will grow to \$3 million when fully annualized, with half paid by the federal government.

“The young people served by this waiver program are eligible to utilize home health services under the Medicaid state plan, like all other Medicaid recipients,” said Department of Social Services (DSS) Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby. “They also have access to all of the other same services under the Medicaid state plan, as all recipients do. In most cases, these services are provided at no additional cost to the families. In addition to Medicaid, the families also receive case management that helps enhance the Medicaid package of services. This is especially important in navigating the health care services needed to support children in the community.”

The Katie Beckett waiver is also essential for families that have exhausted their private insurance options for covering these types of services or that never had them available in the first place.

Barbara Scully, RN, is a nurse consultant who works on the program at DSS. “I speak on a daily basis to parents of children on the Katie Beckett Waiver,” Ms. Scully said. “Over and over, I hear how vast and sometimes overwhelming their children’s health care needs are and how much having Medicaid through the Katie Beckett Waiver means to these families. These parents love their children, as all parents do, and want them home to enjoy being a part of the family. I know I speak for all staff involved in this program to say that it’s an honor to assist families of children with disabilities in accessing Medicaid that allows their children to receive needed services and remain in the household.”

DSS staff have begun the process of contacting families on the waiting list to advise them of the next steps toward qualifying for the Katie Beckett waiver program.

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