

Massachusetts Chapter

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American Academy of Pediatrics

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MCAAP Statement on the MassHealth Section 1115 Waiver Renewal – 10/4/2022

The Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MCAAP) celebrates the Wednesday 9/28 announcement by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that they have approved the MassHealth section 1115 waiver for the next five years. This waiver extension will allow Massachusetts to invest tens of millions of dollars into primary and mental health care workforce development. This will also offer continuous Medicaid eligibility for vulnerable populations.

This is excellent news for all Massachusetts residents, **particularly children**. The Chapter worked closely with the Massachusetts Child and Adolescent Health Initiative (CAHI) to encourage MassHealth to prioritize care for people under age 21 and provided a comprehensive series of recommendations to MassHealth (<https://mcaap.org/2018/wp-content/uploads/Massachusetts-Child-and-Adolescent-Health-Initiative-Report-to-MassHealth-9-2020.pdf>). Most of the CAHI recommendations were incorporated in the approved waiver, which includes much support for expanded pediatric primary care – transforming into teams that integrate mental/behavioral health, more use of community health workers, and better care for children and youth with chronic health conditions. The waiver also addresses more support for unmet health-related social needs of children and families. Finally, the waiver increases investment in primary care and offers new opportunities for pediatric payment.

The MCAAP looks forward to collaborating with MassHealth to implement these important initiatives for the well-being of children and families throughout the Commonwealth.