

HAVI ADVOCACY UPDATE: ADVANCES IN MEDICAID

States are using Medicaid to support violence prevention services

In 2021, President Biden [announced](#) that Medicaid can—and should—utilize the program to reimburse for community violence programs such as hospital-based violence intervention. Shortly thereafter, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services [outlined numerous pathways](#) states could take to utilize this benefit. As of late 2023, seven states—Connecticut, Illinois, California, Oregon, Colorado, Maryland, and New York—have elected to use Medicaid to support CVI programming.

- [Connecticut](#) created a Community Violence Prevention Services benefit, allowing violence prevention professionals to receive reimbursement for frontline work with patients. (2021)
- [Illinois](#) developed a team-based model to support Violence Prevention Community Support Team Services. (2021)
- [California](#) integrated Medicaid violence prevention services with its community health worker program. (2022)
- [Oregon](#) amended its state Medicaid benefits to add coverage and reimbursement for community violence prevention services. (2023)
- Colorado passed [legislation](#) that allows for the coverage of violence prevention services for community health workers. (2023)
- Maryland passed [legislation](#) for Medicaid reimbursement of community violence prevention services. (2023)
- New York passed [legislation](#) to amend the state Medicaid plan to include coverage for community violence prevention services. (2023)

Why does this matter?

Medicaid is the largest public insurance program in the United States. [1] As of 2022, over 68 million Americans received their health benefits through the program.

- For violently injured patients, Medicaid is a lifeline. Research indicates that among victims of gunshot wounds, nearly 2 out of 3 patients are either on Medicaid or uninsured. [2] This coverage is critical as victims of violence face significant health care needs both during and after injury.
- While the physical wounds are most obvious after a violent injury, the psychological and psychosocial needs are just as great. Fortunately, Medicaid provides a comprehensive benefits package to meet those needs as well.
- Medicaid can support survivors of community violence by reimbursing the work of Violence Prevention Professionals (VPPs), who provide comprehensive wraparound services to victims of violent injury.

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How can my state utilize Medicaid to support violence prevention efforts?

The Medicaid program acts as a partnership between the federal and state governments. As a result, states have flexibility in which benefits they can add. Because Medicaid violence prevention benefits are new, individual states must act to add the benefit.

- Many state Medicaid agencies can act without legislation to add coverage of VPP services by creating a state plan amendment (SPA). Advocates should meet with their state Medicaid office as a first step.
- Numerous states have passed laws to create their Medicaid benefits. Supportive lawmakers have crafted bills that have passed with strong bipartisan support.

Where can I learn more?

- The HAVI's [website](#) offers issue papers, fact sheets, and other information to learn more about public funding for community violence intervention.
- The National Association of Medicaid Directors provides an easy-to-navigate [directory](#) to learn more about your state's plan.
- For HAVI members, join the [Policy Working Group](#) for regular updates as well as opportunities for learning and advocacy.

[1] <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/total-population/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

[2] Coupet, E. Karp D, Wiebe DJ, Delgado K. Shift in U.S. Payer responsibility for the acute care of violent injuries after the Affordable Care Act: Implications for Prevention. American Journal of Emergency Medicine. 2018.