

## 2019 Policy Agenda

January 2019

### Top Priorities

**Making sure that Medicaid reform works for kids:** NCPeds supports a strong Medicaid program that works well for the more than 1 million children and their families insured by Medicaid and CHIP. Health plans to run the new program are expected to be announced in February with roll-out beginning in November of 2019. NCPeds will monitor both legislative and administrative proposals relating to Medicaid reform, including the development of Tailored Plans.

**Workforce Adequacy:** NCPeds strongly supports medical teams and access by children to a full range of health care services. NCPeds supports efforts to improve workforce, including using Graduate Medical Education (GME) funds to attract and retain “home grown” physicians, especially in underserved areas. We support telemedicine as a strategy to support, not supplant, the medical home and appropriate training and supports for providers.

### Other Areas of Support

**Close the coverage gap:** More than half a million North Carolinians are unable to see a doctor when they need one because reliable health insurance is out of reach. Insurance can help assure adults are healthier before they conceive, leading to improved birth outcomes. When low-income parents are enrolled in Medicaid, their children are 29% more likely to have a well-child visit. Health insurance can also help parents address their own health issues, including opioid addiction.

**Prevent youth suicide and/or firearm-related deaths and injuries to children:** Support for Child Fatality Task Force recommendations. Continue support for an increase in funding to the School Nurse Funding Initiative by \$5 million recurring to add 100 school nurses in high-need communities to move toward meeting nationally recommended ratios. Continue to support legislation requiring suicide prevention training and a risk referral protocol in schools, with specific requirements related to frequency and duration of the training, who receives the training, and minimum criteria for training components. Continue to endorse an appropriation of \$100,000 in recurring funds for a full-time School Social Worker Consultant to be housed in the Department of Public Instruction Student Support Services in order to provide coordination, training, support, and data collection for school social workers in North Carolina. Continue to support state funding for a new statewide firearm safety initiative focused on education and awareness surrounding firearm safe storage and distribution of free gun locks; funding to go to DHHS to appropriately engage a third-party organization to implement the initiative. (Two-year funding estimate is for \$155,700: \$86,500 for year one; \$69,200 for year two.)

**Support implementation of Raising the Age:** NC recently became one of the last states in the US to stop treating children automatically as adults in the criminal justice system. As NC works towards raising the age, an additional \$50 million in recurring state funding is needed. Overtime, reduced overall state costs are anticipated, but initial investment is needed.

**Assure strong-functioning HIEA:** NCPeds is supportive of strategies to assist physicians and others in the transition to the HIEA, including lengthening the timeframes for connection and encouraging succession planning.

**Promote tobacco-use prevention and cessation:** Promote tobacco use prevention and cessation in North Carolina through statewide, evidence-based and/or evidence-informed policies and appropriations for tobacco use prevention and cessation program.