In conjunction with the AAP’s Private Payor Advocacy Advisory Committee (PPAAC), the Section on Neurology (SONu) epilepsy experts reviewed the Anthem/Blue Cross Blue Shield policy on Genetic Testing for Epilepsy and wrote a letter from the AAP President, Dr. Sandra Hassink, to provide clarification on medical necessity for genetic testing for epilepsy.

The letter urges the carrier to reconsider and revise its current coverage policy on genetic testing for epilepsy as investigational. Specific diagnosis through genetic testing provides important treatment and prognostic information that is critical for treatment planning. Precise diagnosis allows for tailoring of treatment, appropriate counseling for the patient and family, and avoidance of unnecessary, costly, and often further invasive diagnostic testing such as expensive imaging techniques, including MRI scan, neurometabolic testing, and skin biopsy. They gave examples in which genetic testing for epilepsy should be considered medically necessary and hence paid by the health plan as a covered service: 1) Dravet Syndrome and genetic epilepsy with febrile seizures plus (GEFS+) syndrome would contraindicate use of sodium channel drugs; 2) GLUT1 Deficiency Syndrome is diagnosed by genetic testing (not just by CSF analysis); and 3) POLG mutations cause Alpers-Huttenlocher syndrome.

The SONu experts also summarized studies that provide evidence demonstrating the use of genetic testing for epilepsy provides significant improvements in clinical outcomes compared to available alternatives. The Section has had much success with their PPAAC advocacy initiatives over the years, resulting in numerous reversals or revisions of WellPoint/Anthem/Blue Cross policy across the country.
Coordinating Center on Epilepsy Welcomes a New Team Member!

Amy Shah, MPH, joined the Coordinating Center in February as the Project Manager for Project ECHO. She received her B.S. in Biochemistry from University of California, Riverside and graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago with a Masters in Public Health. Amy has spent the last few years as Project Manager at the Center for Research on Health and Aging, Institute for Health and Research Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is experienced in grants management, data collection and evaluation, and partnering with academic centers.

In her previous position, she oversaw the national dissemination of Fit and Strong!, an evidence-based health promotion program for older adults and a NIH-funded physical activity/weight management randomized control trial for older adults with osteoarthritis. Her interests lie in health education and health systems to ensure high-quality health care.

We are delighted to have her onboard and know that she will be a great asset to the team and MCHB grant!

Project ECHO Illinois: Successful Launch!

ECHO-Chicago launched in 2010, in partnership with the South Side Healthcare Collaborative, a robust network of safety-net providers. Based at the University of Chicago and led by Daniel Johnson, MD, FAAP, ECHO-Chicago continues to expand across Chicago and Northern Indiana. In consultation with our community partners we address areas of greatest need; diseases associated with the greatest barriers to subspecialty care and/or disparities in health outcomes.

The ECHO-Chicago Child & Youth Epilepsy (CYE) series launched on February 16th with ten community-based providers from seven community health centers and one safety-net hospital. Participants include advanced practice nurses and physicians who share a commitment to improving care for their patients. As one participant noted, “I am interested in increasing my knowledge about this topic and filling in any gaps to provide better care for my patients.”

The ECHO-Chicago CYE curriculum is delivered through a series of 13 bi-weekly sessions. A short didactic is followed by patient case presentations. One session in each series is held in-person at the University of Chicago to promote a strong social network among participants. For more information, visit: www.echo-chicago.org or contact Dana Sohmer.

TEAM

Daniel Johnson, MD, FAAP, Director, ECHO-Chicago
Kenneth Silver, MD, Subject Matter Expert
Jacqueline Miller, RN, Physician’s Resource Nurse
Tamara Hamlish, PhD, Executive Director, ECHO-Chicago
Dana Sohmer, MA, Project Coordinator, ECHO-Chicago
Zuoli Zhang, MS, Research Specialist, ECHO-Chicago
The Children’s Hospital Colorado Child & Youth Epilepsy (CYE) ECHO series launched on March 3rd! Their first session offered a didactic on “Seizures Overview” presented by Jeremy Toler, MD and a case presentation presented by Carolyn Green, MD. Eleven participants attended the teleECHO clinic. The clinics will run the 1st, 3rd, & 5th Tuesdays at 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m. (MT). In addition, CME/CNE credit at no cost is provided for participating (1 hour = 1 CME credit) conducted via teleconference.

For more information, please contact Korrine Thomas, MPH.

The next states to launch their CYE Clinics are Kansas/Missouri and New York. The collaborating team of Kansas University Medical Center and Children’s Mercy Hospitals & Clinics will be launching their clinic in March/April. The Maimonides Medical Center team in New York will be launching their clinic in June. More information will be shared regarding the team roster and clinic schedule soon. Stay tuned!
The Epilepsy Foundation Western/Central Pennsylvania (EFWCP)

Linking and collaborating with medical home practices across Pennsylvania is a major theme through all of the EFWCP HRSA (Health Resources and Services Administration) grant activities. The Pennsylvania AAP Chapter – Medical Home Initiative (MHI) graciously agreed to partner with the Foundation in the development of and implementation of the project. The goal of this partnership is to assist with activities related to: telemedicine, care-coordination, transition to adult life/healthcare, increased epilepsy awareness and patient care and patient/family outreach. Specific examples include:

- **Neurology Telemedicine** – The MHI has provided the names of all medical home practices, especially rural practices, and provided introductions to potential telemedicine sites. Two sites have been developed and one site is under consideration.

- **Care-coordination** – Thus far, The EFWCP has sent letters of introduction to 30 practices. Networking meetings are being scheduled. Care-coordination practices are being explored and effective practices shared.

- **Transition** – EFWCP staff sit on the MHI/Transition Advisory Committee and discussions are taking place for a transition pilot project.

- **Epilepsy Awareness** – EFWCP and Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh offer epilepsy training and support to MH practice medical staff and on-going consultation.

- **Patient/Family Outreach** – EFWCP staff review options for reaching families impacted by epilepsy in each MH practice. On-going support to families and patients is offered.

**Building Your Medical Home: An Introduction to Pediatric Primary Care Transformation**

The National Center for Medical Home Implementation (NCMHI) presents a brand new resource that provides direction, resources, and tools to pediatric medical home clinicians and practices seeking to advance their knowledge and understanding of the medical home concept as it relates to practice transformation. Visit [www.pediatricmedhome.org](http://www.pediatricmedhome.org) to view this new and innovative resource.

**Beyond Policy: Implementing Care Coordination in Practice**

March 30, 2015, Noon – 1 pm Central Time

NCMHI is also hosting the first webinar in a three part series focusing on implementation and evaluation of pediatric care coordination. This webinar will outline clinical guidelines and identify strategies and resources to help facilitate the implementation of care coordination in practice. Faculty will provide real life examples of successful care coordination and highlight outcomes for patients and families on the receiving end of care coordination services.

Additional information and registration for the webinar is available here.
New Tips Available for Transition Improvement

A practical set of steps and lessons learned for starting a Transition Improvement process is now available on www.gottransition.org. These tips have been created based on lessons learned from transition improvement projects across the country. They are intended for use by pediatric, family medicine, and internal medicine primary care and specialty practices as well as by health systems, health plans, and payers in concert with the clinical tools and measurement resources. Click here to access this new information.

COMING SOON: The AAP Digital Navigator with the NCQA PCMH 2014 Standards!

The American Academy of Pediatrics Practice Excellence Program (APEX) offers resources and tools that will provide assistance to practices during their transformation process into the Patient and Family-Centered Medical Home model of care through its Digital Navigator tool.

The Digital Navigator is a web-based software application designed to guide practices during the transformation into the medical home model of care.

The Digital Navigator offers both Single-Site and Multi-Site Implementation Management (Multi-Site Service) and is designed to allow the purchaser to setup, manage, and monitor the results of practice transformation efforts in the practice setting.

With more than 400 resources and a methodology that aligns with the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) PCMH recognition program, the Digital Navigator can guide your practice transformation and prepare you for NCQA PCMH recognition.

For more information or a demo of the tool, contact DNSales@aap.org.

New AAP Information on the Evaluation of the Child with Intellectual Disability or Global Developmental Delays

Intellectual disability (ID) and global developmental delays (GDD) are relatively common pediatric conditions. For both pediatric primary care clinicians and families, there are specific benefits to establishing an etiologic diagnosis. Clarification of etiology allows parents and/or caregivers to gain an understanding of the disorder and how it affects the child’s development and behavior. Early identification allows pediatric clinicians and families to focus on the appropriate management strategies that will maximize their child’s potential.

An optimal medical genetics evaluation of the child with ID or GDD is described the AAP clinical report, “Comprehensive Evaluation of the Child with Intellectual Disability or Global Developmental Delays.” The report discusses chromosome microarray testing as a first-line test, Fragile X testing, the importance of considering inborn errors of metabolism and the potential role of brain MRI. Additionally, the importance of co-management among families, the medical home and the medical genetics specialty clinic are explored with the intention of helping to prepare primary care pediatricians and the families they serve for the genetic evaluation process. The full report is available on the Pediatrics Web site.
Nurse practitioners working in pediatric settings can now join the American Academy of Pediatrics and join forces with 62,000 members to advance the health of children.

- Earn NAPNAP Credit through EQIPPP Quality Improvement Courses
- Stay current with the latest in pediatrics and infectious diseases with Red Book® Online, Pediatrics online, AAP News (print and online), eBreaking News and AAP News OnCall
- Collaborate with others who share similar interests and specialties through membership opportunities in other Sections and Councils (per section bylaws)
- Save time and money by using shop.aap.org quickly and easily for discounted AAP products, subscriptions, and meetings

Engage with other pediatric nurse practitioners, pediatric physician assistants, and pediatricians to strengthen the network for communication and education in the physician-directed, team-based approach to care. Join the AAP today by submitting an application here. Dues are just $150 and NAPNAP members receive a 10% discount. For more information, please contact AAP Customer Service at 866/THE-AAP1(843-2271) or csc@aap.org.

Save The Date! 2015 AAP National Conference and Exhibition

Please join us in Washington, DC for a monumental experience! Click here for more information!
Funding Opportunities

This monthly funding announcement is a listing of current funding opportunities available from the AAP and other agencies on a variety of health topics and target populations. To receive this monthly funding alert, please e-mail the Division of Community-based Initiatives.

Resources

"Building Your Medical Home" Online Resource Guide
Free Online Course: Adverse Childhood Experiences
CDC Learn the Signs. Act Early.
Free Health Literacy Web-based Training
AAP Quality Connections Newsletter
Sustainability Resources

Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program (HTPCP)

HTPCP is a competitive grant program that awards funds to innovative, community-based projects to improve access to health care and promote preventive health services. To learn more, visit Program Overview.

HTPCP Celebrates 25 Years!

To commemorate this milestone, Healthy Tomorrows created a video to tell the story of the program from around the country. View the video below.
March | April | May
Calendar of Events

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<th>New Mexico CYE TeleECHO Clinics</th>
<th>Colorado CYE TeleECHO Clinics</th>
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For more information regarding the TeleECHO Clinics, contact Amy Shah, MPH, Project Manager, Project ECHO

“Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.”

- - Vince Lombardi - -