

Tip Sheet for Building Successful Public Health Agency and Medicaid Collaborations

Based on peer feedback, two critical steps are recommended for internal planning prior to contacting Medicaid:

1. Involve Executive Leadership

- Executive backing is particularly critical for three objectives:
 - Initiating the first contact with the Medicaid agency.
 - Obtaining necessary state matching funds.
 - Promoting inter-program coordination throughout the health department to align with Medicaid requirements.
- Consult with your Immunization Program Manager to navigate the internal hierarchy and reach decision-makers. Using high-level advocates can prevent early rejections, as executives often have established relationships with Medicaid leadership. Note that the most effective liaison might be a leader who manages general health reform or social services rather than just immunizations.
- Securing state matching funds, whether from general funds or specific health taxes, is a high-level priority. Since these funds face competing interests, leadership must decide to commit them. To build a compelling case, emphasize the leverage of federal funding and how Immunization Information System (IIS) efforts support broader administration goals.
- Finally, because Medicaid prefers unified agency-wide proposals, senior support is necessary to enforce departmental coordination. When preparing for these discussions, extract essential context from the toolkit narrative to inform your leadership.

2. Leverage Lessons from Previous Medicaid Partnerships

- Medicaid agencies prefer engaging with a unified health department. Coordination is key, as they look to avoid funding redundant efforts across different programs.
- Develop an agency-wide strategy that emphasizes shared infrastructure. Highlighting common assets, such as provider management systems, overlapping staff roles, and health information exchange (HIE) connections, can demonstrate efficiency to CMS.
- Understanding how Medicaid's operational style differs from public health is essential for building a successful partnership. Analyzing previous interactions can reveal critical insights into becoming a more effective collaborator.
 - Past projects may have involved various divisions within the Medicaid agency, yet they often provide valuable precedents for inter-agency fund sharing and technical support.
- Use these historical ties to establish the health department's reputation as a dependable ally.
 - While not every past initiative is a success, each one offers instructive lessons for future growth.