



TASB Special Education Solutions

# Information on School Health and Related Services (SHARS)



Special Education Solutions

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## **What is School Health and Related Services (SHARS)?**

SHARS is Texas' school-based Medicaid program. School districts are not automatically enrolled in SHARS and are not required to participate. The oversight of SHARS is a cooperative effort between the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). It gives local school districts, including public charter schools, the opportunity to obtain Medicaid reimbursement for certain health-related services provided to students that:

- Are 20 years of age and younger and eligible for Medicaid;
- Meet eligibility requirements for special education as described in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and
- Have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that documents the needed services

## **What is Third Party Liability (TPL)?**

TPL is a federally mandated Medicaid policy that requires states seek reimbursement for Medicaid covered services from any legally liable third party, such as a client's other insurance. In Texas, this is done using the "pay and recover later" method. Under this method, districts bill Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership (TMHP) for SHARS services provided to eligible students, the services are paid by TMHP, it then determines if a client has other insurance and if they do it seeks reimbursement for the services from the client's other insurance. Parents should be informed of this because although they should never incur any cost as a result of this policy, their other insurance lifetime benefits may be affected.

## **Will parents/guardians be responsible for any bills as a result of TPL?**

No. Any costs such as co-pays or deductibles charged by a client's other insurance as a result of SHARS will be paid by HHSC/Texas Medicaid. Clients will most likely receive an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) when their other insurance is charged by TMHP for a SHARS service provided by their student's school district. The EOB is typically sent for the client's records but is not considered a bill.



## What services are covered by the SHARS program?

The services reimbursable by the SHARS include:

- Audiology Services
- Counseling
- Nursing Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Personal Care Services
- Physical Therapy
- Physician Services
- Psychological Services
- Speech Therapy
- Specialized Transportation

## Does billing under SHARS impact a child's Medicaid benefits outside of school?

The Medicaid services the child receives at school do not affect the type or amount of Medicaid services the child receives outside the school. The child's eligibility for Medicaid services outside the school setting is not compromised by receiving SHARS services at school. There is no lifetime benefit cap for Medicaid services to children 20 years of age or younger.

## Does the parent/guardian have to participate in SHARS or allow for TPL for their child?

In order for participating SHARS school districts to bill Medicaid for services provided to a student, it must first obtain parental consent from the student's parent/guardian to do so. Providing consent is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time. If a parent/guardian does consent, any services provided to their student and billed by the district to TMHP will be subject to the TPL policy. If consent is denied or withdrawn, the TPL policy will not apply to any SHARS services provided by the school district.

## If the parent refuses to participate, will it affect services provided at school?

No, by law school districts must provide IEP prescribed services for special education students to receive a free and appropriate public education, regardless if a parent grants/denies consent.



## **Sources:**

<http://www.tmhp.com/resources/provider-manuals/tmppm>

<https://pfd.hhs.texas.gov/acute-care/school-health-and-related-services-shars>

<https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/programs-and-services/school-health-and-related-services>