



Testimony in Support of SB123
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Senate Public Health and Welfare
February 11, 2015

The Problem

- **Past research identified the problem**
- **Recent psychotropic prescription practices jeopardize health and safety**
- **Current law prevents the Medicaid agency from taking any action to address concerns stemming from these practices**

KU Study on Medicaid Children

Out of 18,820 children surveyed:

- **6,288 children** (or 33.4% of the survey population) received *two or more* drugs concurrently for 60 days or longer
- **1,645 children** received 3 drugs concurrently for 60 days or longer
- **504 children** received 4 drugs for 60 days or longer¹

Prescription Trends

- The number of children on antipsychotics has nearly tripled in the past 15 years²
- Children in the child welfare system are prescribed psychotropic medications at higher rates than the general population³
- Psychotropic prescription rates are also higher among child Medicaid beneficiaries than non-Medicaid recipients⁴
- Hundreds of child Medicaid beneficiaries are on multiple antipsychotics at the same time.⁵

Recent Prescriptions

United

- **479** members age 6 and under on antipsychotics

Sunflower

- **569** members taking more than one antipsychotic for greater than 60 days

Amerigroup

- **6,878** children under the age of 10 were prescribed mental health medications in 2014
- **3,652** members age 20 and under on antipsychotics or antimanic agents in 2014

Health Risks

- Children on anti-psychotic drugs are at higher risk for long-term side effects, including:
 - Weight gain
 - High cholesterol
 - Type-2 diabetes⁶
- Other risks include:
 - Tardive dyskinesia
 - Neuroleptic malignant syndrome⁷
- Withdrawal can be extremely difficult

The Solution

- **SB123 repeals the statute that prevents the Medicaid agency from addressing these concerns**
- **Passage of SB123 would provide flexibility for the Medicaid agency to collaborate with mental health providers and develop policies that ensure access to care and protect the health and well-being of our most vulnerable Kansans**

Moving Forward

What would new policy look like?

A nuanced and flexible policy approach will ensure that patients have access to the medications that they need while still protecting Medicaid patients, particularly children and older adults, from overmedication and inappropriate prescription practices

Protecting Kansans

- Patients who are already stable on their current medications will be able to continue their prescribed treatment
- Creation of a Mental Health Medication Advisory Committee
- Review certain medications for safety and dose optimization
- New prescriptions or changes in medication will be subject to evidence-based guidelines developed by the Drug Utilization Review Board with the counsel of the Mental Health Medication Advisory Committee

Transition Steps

- KDHE and KDADS have established a behavioral health medications workgroup to ensure policy development aligns with key principles.
 - First meeting February 17

Notes and References

1. Akin, B., Bryson, S., Moore, Terry. *Medicaid Children's Focused Study: Prescribing Patterns of Psychotropic Drugs Among Child Medicaid Beneficiaries in the State of Kansas*. University of Kansas School of Social Welfare, 2009. <http://www.keys.org/kureports/finalreportdrugs.pdf>
2. "Are too many kids taking antipsychotic drugs?" Consumer Reports, December 2013.
<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/2013/12/are-too-many-kids-taking-antipsychotic-drugs/index.htm>

Notes and References

3. Stambaugh, L.F., Leslie, L.K., Ringeisen, H., Smith, K., & Hodgkin, D. (2012). *Psychotropic medication use by children in child welfare*. OPRE Report #2012-33, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/psych_med.pdf
4. Akin, etc., *Medicaid Children's Focused Study*, 2009.
<http://www.keys.org/kureports/finalreportdrugs.pdf>
5. Ibid.
6. Consumer Reports, December 2013.
<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/2013/12/are-too-many-kids-taking-antipsychotic-drugs/index.htm>

Notes and References

7. Dr. Peter Breggin, “Soaring numbers of children on powerful adult psychiatric drugs,” *The Huffington Post*, Aug. 14, 2012.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-peter-breggin/children-antipsychotics_b_1771152.html