

2022 NH Breastfeeding Task Force Conference

The NH Legislature has wrapped up its 2022 session. Healthcare advocates spent most of the legislative session educating and informing policymakers on the negative consequences of the vast number of bills that were anti-science and/or would have negatively impacted our healthcare infrastructure.

Concurrently, maternal and child health had champions working on several pieces of legislation, noted below. While not every effort was successful, the NH Legislature was able to advance a few policy initiatives that will positively impact maternal and child health.

Highlighted 2022 NH Legislation:

HB 1099 – originally SB 407/HB 1536 – extending Medicaid for postpartum women originally SB 403 – re-establishing the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program

After sailing through the Senate, Senate Bills 407 and 403 passed out of the necessary House Committees – Health and Human Services and Finance. However, on the House floor, problematic amendments were attached to the bills. The Senate rejected those bills but attached the policies to HB 1099. Because it was amended, the bill went to a Committee of Conference, a joint committee comprised of House and Senate appointees. After negotiation, HB 1099 was ready to be signed off on. In the last moment, one Representative decided to not sign the CoC report. This was the last step in the legislative process; the bill *failed*.

Medicaid expansion for postpartum population - DHHS is actively exploring an administrative measure to expand Medicaid coverage for the postpartum population to 12 months through the end of the federal Public Health Emergency (PHE). In January, DHHS will move to seek approval for a state plan amendment (SPA) from the 2023 Legislature.

WIC farmers market benefit – DHHS and policy advocates will advocate for this initiative to be included in the next budget, to be drafted, negotiated, and finalized in 2023.

SB 393 – relative to the use of restraints on pregnant women in the custody of a state or county correctional facility

Codifies appropriate procedures and practices for the Department of Corrections use of restraints on pregnant and laboring women in county and state correctional custody.

Passed both the Senate and House; to Governor for signature or veto

SB 404 – establishing a supplemental nutrition assistance program

Enables DHHS to develop a state outreach plan for eligible persons from SNAP. This bill conditions implementation on federal funds sufficient to cover administration.

Passed both the Senate and House; to Governor for signature or veto

SB 444 – relative to childhood adverse experiences treatment and prevention

Requires DHHS to establish a pilot program for children who have experienced ACEs or other trauma. This bill appropriates \$2.75m of ARPA funding to support this program.

Passed both the Senate and House; to Governor for signature or veto

HB 1661- originally SB 430 – relative to Medicaid reimbursement rates for hospital birthing services

DHHS omnibus bill; includes increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for hospital birthing facilities (25%)

Passed both the Senate and House; to Governor for signature or veto

SB 408 – directing DHHS to make adjustments to the facility fee reimbursement schedule for freestanding birthing centers

Requires DHHS to revise the Medicaid facility fee reimbursement for freestanding birthing centers. DHHS will raise the rate from \$637.78 to \$921.

Passed both the Senate and House; to Governor for signature or veto