

1 - Guardianship and Hospice

EveryStep asks the General Assembly to support legislation that allows a patient's guardian an expedited process to be granted permissions by the courts related to end-of-life care.



Per Iowa law, if a patient has a guardian, the guardian must return to petition the court to be granted additional rights as the patient's health status changes. This includes having to get court approval to change a patient's status from full code to "do not resuscitate" or to enter the patient into end-of-life (hospice) care.

Often, this results in significant stress to families and patients. It can take time to have the guardianship responsibilities updated, and many times the patient dies before the court approves the changes. This can also result in the patient's death lacking the peace and dignity that hospice care provides.

EveryStep and the Hospice & Palliative Care Association of Iowa (HPCAI) understand and support the careful consideration when it comes to responsibilities of guardians, but urges the Legislature to enact an expedited process for changes to the responsibilities being approved.

2 - Medicaid Payments

The General Assembly should ensure managed care organizations pay claims in a timely and consistent manner, update Medicaid rates and ease administrative burdens for providers.



Hospice providers continue to struggle with the administrative complexities from implementing Medicaid managed care organizations in Iowa. These complexities include continued inconsistent and inaccurate payments on Medicaid claims, changes to managed care organization reimbursement guidelines and inconsistent policies and practices for prior authorizations.

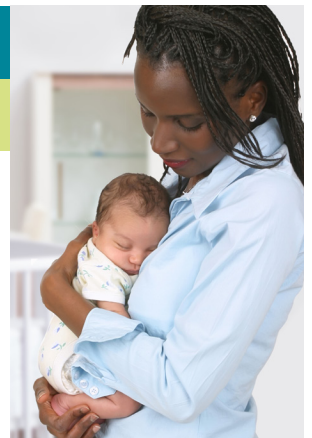
During the 2022 legislative session, the legislature considered and passed legislation strengthening Iowa's Medicaid program while creating a more efficient system. The different bills included supporting providers when prior authorizations were approved and ensuring coverage when a patient is Medicaid-eligible. HPCAI was grateful for these bills and is supportive of the legislature's continued work on this, including considering legislation for reducing the recoupment timeline of overpayments and easing the credentialing process.

3 - Postpartum Medicaid Coverage

Extend Medicaid to cover 12 months of postpartum care

Medicaid is a critical source of health insurance coverage for moms and babies in Iowa, covering nearly 1 out of every 2 births in the state. But many moms in Iowa lose their Medicaid coverage 60-days after giving birth—one of the shortest postpartum coverage periods in the country. **Iowa is one of only three states that have not taken up the option of providing postpartum Medicaid coverage beyond 60-days.**

As the primary payor of births in Iowa, Medicaid can play a critical role in improving the health of moms and babies. Enacting 12-months postpartum Medicaid coverage is the simplest and most targeted way to ensure that moms can get the care they need to keep them and their baby healthy.



4 - Children's Grief & Loss Services in Rural Iowa

EveryStep asks for continued support of the school-based grief and loss program, and requests a renewed investment to sustain and grow the program to include additional rural school districts.

FUNDING REQUESTED: \$200,000



Addressing Children's Mental Health Through Grief Support Following Trauma & Loss

Since 2018, EveryStep has provided services in Iowa schools to support children experiencing grief and loss. In 2021, the Iowa Legislature began provided yearly funding to allow EveryStep to expand services beyond the Des Moines metropolitan area.

Studies show that roughly 1 in 14 school-aged children will lose a parent, and 1 in 5 will lose someone close to them. Furthermore, feelings of grief and loss can stem from divorce, abandonment, incarceration, and other traumatic events. EveryStep has a plan and vision to address the impact these losses have on children in Iowa.

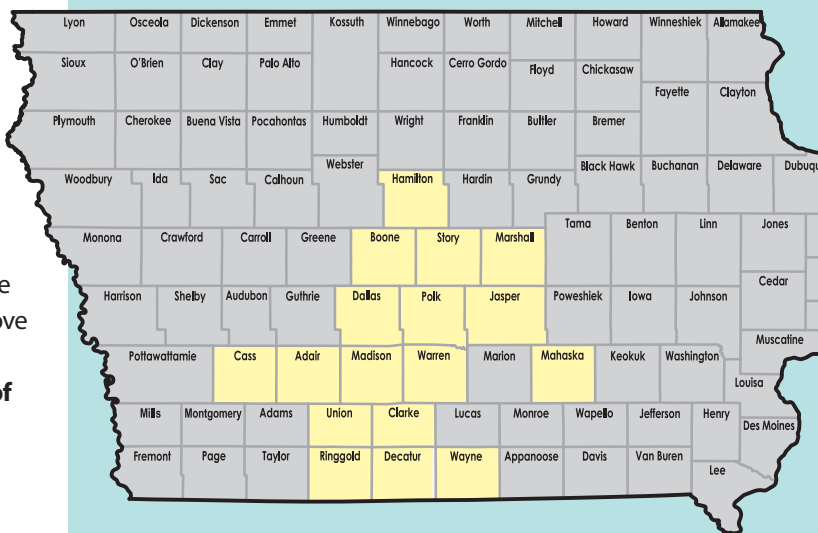
Each child's grief is personal and unique. EveryStep staff are trained to assist with the complexity of what it means to experience grief and loss at a young age. It is important that we provide children with the tools to address their grief and improve classroom engagement. **Creating structures of support for grieving students is an investment in the long-term health of children, families and our communities.**

By giving kids healthy coping skills we can help them down a path that leads to healing, positive relationships with others, and success at school. Our group-based approach provides the necessary amount of support for most kids, while allowing our staff to identify kids who need a higher level of support.

Counties Served To Date with School-Based Grief Support

Adair	Dallas	Madison	Story
Boone	Decatur	Mahaska	Union
Cass	Hamilton	Marshall	Warren
Clarke	Jasper	Ringgold	Wayne

Number of Schools Served to Date: 40



In January 2022, rural students began participating in the school-based program. Throughout each 6-week session, students shared their grief stories, connected with peers and learned resiliency skills to feel better equipped to cope with grief in healthy ways.

We thank you for your continued support!

EveryStep 

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For more information about EveryStep's legislative priorities, please contact:

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