

Section 4: Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs

Program Purpose

Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs (SHCN) was established in 1931 utilizing state, county, and private funds. With the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935, programs for mothers and children, including children with special health care needs, was established across the nation in Title V of the Act. The program is administered by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

Kansas Special Health Care Needs (SHCN) promotes the functional skills of young people in Kansas who have a disability or chronic disease. The method for doing this is by providing or supporting a system of specialty health care.

Eligibility

Eligible individuals must live in Kansas, be under the age of 21 years, have a medical condition covered by the program, and meet the program's financial guidelines.

Conditions that are eligible for treatment include:

- Spina bifida
- Cleft palate/cleft lip
- Acquired or congenital heart disease
- Burns
- Major orthopedic problems
- Congenital gastro-intestinal conditions requiring surgery
- Limited genitourinary problems requiring surgery
- Genetic and metabolic conditions (PKU, sickle cell, cystic fibrosis hypothyroidism, galactosemia, hemophilia, Maple Syrup Urine Disease)
- Hearing problems
- Limited vision disorders
- Selected craniofacial anomalies
- Seizures

Each application is individually reviewed, and a decision is made according to guidelines established for financial and medical eligibility. The special needs of the person with the disability and those of the family are considered part of each decision.

Services Provided

SHCN provides diagnosis and treatment, outreach clinics, and special services. Services Provided:

- Care Coordination
- Medical specialists
- Outpatient care
- Hospitalization
- Surgery
- Durable medical equipment
- Reimbursement for transportation to medical specialty care
- Interpreter services
- Support with transition planning
- Limited speech therapy for youth with severe hearing loss or cleft palate/cleft lip
- Limited rehabilitative physical or occupational therapy for youth with severe burns or eligible orthopedic conditions

All treatment services must have prior authorization.

Assistive Technology Covered

- SHCN primarily provides funding for durable medical equipment (DME) that supports medical and functional needs.
- The program is a payor of last resort, meaning all other funding sources must be used first (e.g., insurance, Medicaid/KanCare, charitable resources, etc.).
- SHCN may pay co-pays or the remaining balance after other approved funding sources have contributed.
- All purchases require prior authorization.
- DME providers must accept SHCN's reimbursement rate and cannot bill families for additional costs.
- Examples of covered assistive technology include braces, crutches, eyeglasses, hearing aids, manual wheelchairs, and other prescribed medical equipment.
- For higher-cost electronic equipment (such as power wheelchairs), SHCN may contribute toward the purchase price, depending on funding availability and prior approval.

Families enrolled in SHCN may access Direct Assistance Programs (DAPs) to address specific needs and may be eligible for Special Bequest funding for medical or adaptive

equipment, or other supports that improve function and quality of life. This will cover such items as bath chairs, car seats, and various adaptive equipment.

Problems Obtaining Assistive Technology

- SHCN provides funding only for specific eligible medical conditions.
- Children who do not have a qualifying diagnosis are not eligible for funding through this program.
- SHCN is a payor of last resort, meaning all other funding sources (e.g., private insurance, KanCare/Medicaid, or community programs) must be explored and exhausted first.
- The program may provide full or partial funding only after other resources have been applied.
- For some assistive technology or electronic equipment, SHCN funding may not cover the entire cost.
- Families may need to seek additional funding sources to cover remaining expenses.

Application Process

- Complete the SHCN Application Form
 - Use the official form available on the KDHE website:
<https://www.kdhe.ks.gov/747/Special-Health-Care-Needs>
- Make sure all sections are filled out completely
- Sign Required Pages
 - Pages 3 and 4 of the application must be signed by the parent, guardian, or applicant (if 18 or older).
- Include Guardianship Documentation
 - If the applicant is 18 or older and under guardianship, include a copy of guardianship paperwork.
- Attach Required Documentation
 - Include medical documentation, proof of income, and insurance information (if applicable).
- Submit the Completed Application
 - You can mail, fax, or email the application to your local SHCN office.
 - Contact information for regional offices is available on the KDHE website or on the application form.

Helpful Contacts

SHCN Administrative Office

Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs

Landon State Office Bldg., Rm 1005N
900 SW Jackson
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1290
(785) 296-1313

SHCN Field Offices

Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs

3243 E. Murdock, Suite 202
Wichita, Kansas 67208
(316) 688-2021

Special Health Services, KUMC

CDU, Room 1005
3901 Rainbow Boulevard
Kansas City, Kansas 66160-7340
(913) 588-6343

Make A Difference Information Network

(800) 332-6262

Appeals Process

Families have the right to appeal a decision to deny or terminate services. Appeals should be submitted to the Director of SHCN, who will review the application and issue a response. If further review is desired, an additional appeal may be submitted to the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.