Nemours

Nemours Children's Health Champions New Bill Created to Address Social Determinants of Health Affecting Nation's Children

KIDS Health Act will help states offer preventative care, keeping children healthy and creating a foundation for long-term wellbeing

WASHINGTON, DC (September 29, 2022) – Nemours Children's Health commends the introduction of the comprehensive bipartisan KIDS Health Act, which was introduced today in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives. The bill, sponsored by Senators Tom Carper, D-DE, and Dan Sullivan, R-AK; and Representatives Lisa Blunt Rochester, D-DE, and Dr. Michael Burgess, R-TX, would help states and communities rethink the way they care for children and address the non-medical factors that impact physical and mental health.

> *"Nemours Children's Health applauds the bipartisan sponsors of this important legislation, and their leadership to help the nation's children live healthy, fulfilled lives"*

The KIDS Health Act would help states test payment and delivery reforms that integrate prevention and social determinants of health (SDOH) approaches into healthcare for children and youth eligible for Medicaid and CHIP. States would enhance training for their healthcare workforce and improve health information technology systems to better facilitate data sharing, early intervention, and care coordination across child-serving sectors.

"Nemours Children's Health applauds the bipartisan sponsors of this important legislation, and their leadership to help the nation's children live healthy, fulfilled lives," said R. Lawrence Moss, MD, FACS, FAAP, President & CEO, Nemours Children's Health. "Working with our nation's leaders is critical as Nemours strives to go well beyond medicine, getting one step closer to realizing our vision, to create the healthiest generations of children."

The KIDS HEALTH Act would also:

- Offer flexibility to awardees and support various value-based payment models so more states can test innovations that promote prevention early on
- Provide technical assistance and resources to help states implement innovative multi-sector financing approaches to support whole child health
- Fund training related to trauma-informed and culturally competent care for existing and newly recruited workforce
- Enhance existing health information technology infrastructure to support cross-sector data-sharing capabilities, referrals, and care coordination

COVID-19 has placed additional stressors on children and families, taking a substantial toll on the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of children.

"The foundation for adult health and well-being is built during childhood. Research indicates up to 80 percent of an individual's health outcomes can be attributed to nonmedical drivers of health, such as access to nutritious food, mental health services and education," said Kara Odom Walker, MD, Chief Population Health Officer, Nemours Children's Health. "The KIDS Health Act focuses on strategies to address SDOH and support healthy development and strong family relationships. We have an opportunity to invest in whole child health models that focus on keeping children healthy, rather than managing their care once they are sick."

In addition, The Whole Child Health Alliance, of which Nemours is a founding member, is working to address whole child health through models that promote health and wellbeing while also improving health equity. To learn more about how Nemours is going well beyond medicine and working to address SDOH, visit https://www.nemours.org/well-beyond-medicine.html

Organizations endorsing the bill include:

Nemours Children's Health

American Foundation for
Suicide Prevention

American Psychological
Association

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

APA Society for Child and Family Policy & Practice

Children & Families First Delaware, Inc.

Children’s Wisconsin

ChristianaCare

DE Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Delaware Psychological Association

Dell Medical School/Dell Children's Hospital

Elevated Insights Assessment

Families USA

First Focus Campaign for Children

Florida Policy Institute

Highmark Health

KIDS COUNT in Delaware

Krista Trefz Therapy LLC

Magnolia Connection

Nemours Children’s Health

Oregon Health and Science University

Providence College

REACH Riverside

Rodel

The California Children’s Trust

Transformedia LLC

University of Pittsburgh

About Nemours Children’s Health

Nemours Children’s Health is one of the nation’s largest multistate pediatric health systems, including two free-standing children's hospitals and a network of more than 70 primary and specialty care practices. Nemours Children's seeks to transform the health of children by adopting a holistic health model that utilizes innovative, safe, and high-quality care, while also caring for the health of the whole child beyond medicine. Nemours Children's also powers the world’s most-visited

website for information on the health of children and teens, KidsHealth.org. The Nemours Foundation, established through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to the children, families and communities it serves.

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