

>>> "Sharon Fitzgerald" <fitzcomm@home.com> 10/11/00 04:29PM >>>  
Hi Francis:

These are the questions I have regarding the story:

1. Forty states may have to give up hundreds of millions of dollars earmarked for CHIP because allotted funds weren't used within Congress' specified time frame. Mississippi is one of those states. What is Mississippi's reason(s) for leaving funds on the table \_\_ if that is, in fact, what happened?

RICA: "The funds at risk for redistribution were funds that were distributed for Federal fiscal year 1998. At the end of calendar year 1999 there were only 500 kids enrolled in Mississippi Health Benefits. Since January of this year approximately 16,000 kids have been enrolled."

2. If money is being forfeited, how much?

RICA: "It is estimated that approximately \$25 million of the \$56 million allocated for Federal fiscal year 1998 is at risk. The good news however is that legislation has been proposed to again reallocate these funds to the state. The reallocation methodology at this point is not clear. We are optimistic about this proposed legislation since it has been reported that at least one state, New York, may have inappropriately used the funds by enrolling their Medicaid kids in their CHIP program."

3. How is Mississippi working to improve delivery of health care to all children?

RICA: "The Office of the Governor - Division of Medicaid is in transition from a bill processing system to a patient care focused one. The point here is that the Division of Medicaid is responsible for the healthcare of approximately 25% of this state's citizens. As such we must play a significant role in the delivery of health services in the state of Mississippi."

That's it! Please let me know as soon as you can, Francis. Thank you.

Sharon Fitzgerald  
Medical News Inc. writer

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