

CAPS applauds South Carolina Medicaid for expanding access to NIPTS for all women who chose screening, without restrictions related to age or other risk factors.

July 10, 2024, Washington, DC. - The Coalition for Access to Prenatal Screening (CAPS) applauds South Carolina's Medicaid's modernization of coverage for cell-free DNA (cfDNA)-based noninvasive prenatal screening (NIPS) to all women regardless of their risk factors, income, or age, with no prior authorization, with an effective date of July 1, 2024. With this NIPTS policy update, South Carolina joins thirty-four other state Medicaid programs in providing NIPTS to all who seek screening. South Carolina Medicaid has renewed their commitment to comprehensive prenatal care by providing access to all pregnant persons within South Carolina Medicaid. South Carolina previously provided coverage for NIPTS only to patients deemed to be "high risk", and CAPS is encouraged to see expanded coverage in the state.

NIPS represents a major advancement in screening for common fetal chromosomal aneuploidies through the analysis of millions of cfDNA fragments in the blood of a pregnant person. Chromosomal aneuploidies are characterized by an abnormal number of chromosomes, which may cause genetic disorders in a newborn baby, including some birth defects. Prenatal screening for chromosomal aneuploidies using analysis of serum proteins has been the standard of care for decades. However, cfDNA-based NIPTS has become the preferred method of prenatal screening for many healthcare providers and patients since its introduction to clinical practice in 2011.

Numerous professional organizations, including the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM), the International Society for Prenatal Diagnosis (ISPD), the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG), and the National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC) have recognized cfDNA-based NIPS as a screening option for all pregnancies, given appropriate patient counseling regarding the performance, risks and benefits of such testing.

Two-thirds of all state Medicaid programs now cover NIPS for all their Medicaid eligible recipients. We look forward to working with other state Medicaid programs to further expand their policies to ensure all who seek screening receive comprehensive, modernized prenatal care across the country.

To learn more about cfDNA-based NIPS and CAPS, visit <https://capsprenatal.com/>.