

What is NEMT?

For millions of Medicaid beneficiaries, a lack of transportation presents a serious barrier to accessing medical treatment and community-based services.



Nearly 60 percent of Medicaid beneficiaries report a lack of reliable and affordable transportation as a barrier to receiving health care services.

Annals of Emerging Medicine, 60, Issue 1 (2012): 4-10.e2.

One study estimated at least 3.6 million people miss or delay medical care each year because **they lack available or affordable transportation**. This study found that improved access to NEMT for this population is cost-effective or cost-saving for all 12 medical conditions analyzed, including preventive services such as prenatal care, and chronic conditions such as asthma, heart disease, and diabetes. This study also noted that adults who lack transportation to medical care are disproportionately poor, elderly, and disabled and more likely to have multiple health conditions.

Cost-Benefit Analysis of Providing Non-Emergency Medical Transportation, Transit Cooperative Research Program

Medicaid Transportation

To address this issue, Medicaid provides needed transportation services to and from qualifying Medicaid services for eligible beneficiaries. Medicaid transportation services include:

Emergency Medical Transportation (EMT)

In an emergency, Medicaid will pay for the cost of transportation - such as travel to the hospital by ambulance in the event of a heart attack.

Because an emergency can't be planned, Medicaid emergency transportation does not require pre-approval.

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)

Medicaid offers scheduled transportation services for trips that do not involve a medical emergency.

This service is called Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT).

NEMT is an important benefit for Medicaid beneficiaries who need to get to and from Medicaid associated services but have no means of transportation. Through this federally-required benefit, states purchase hundreds of millions of rides from taxis, vans, buses, and public transit every year. More than three billion dollars is spent annually on NEMT in the U.S. - less than one percent of total Medicaid expenditures.

NEMT Administration Varies by State

State Medicaid agencies have considerable latitude in how they administer NEMT benefits. Each state may administer their Medicaid NEMT program differently. As a result, there are significant state-to-state variations in how NEMT is provided.

What is NEMT? continues on the next page.

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NEMT in Kentucky

In Kentucky, the Department of Medicaid Services has a contract with the Transportation Cabinet to oversee all Medicaid transportation.

NEMT Services are provided by Regional Transportation Brokers as a part of the Human Service Transportation Delivery Program, which is overseen by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.

