

Medicaid Matters

Gov. Riley signs General Fund budget, FMAP extension pending

State lawmakers wrapped up the 2010 regular session by passing a General Fund budget totaling \$345 million toward Medicaid's \$5.2 billion budget for FY 2011. Gov. Bob Riley signed the budget into law on April 21, a day before legislators adjourned the annual session.

In addition to passage of the General Fund and education budgets, legislators approved a one-year Nursing Home Privilege Tax to provide funds needed by the state's Medicaid program. The newly-approved General Fund budget, which takes effect Oct. 1, 2010, effectively maintains the Alabama Medicaid program for another year, although \$196 million in the budget's revenue stream is contingent on approval of a federal matching rate extension now pending before Congress.

The \$1.6 billion General Fund budget includes a \$37 million increase in state funding for Medicaid along with a \$35 million allocation to Medicaid for FY 2011 from the Children First Trust Fund.



State Advisory Committee approves LTC Rebalancing recommendations

An "all-inclusive" program to meet elderly and disabled Medicaid recipients' changing needs and a waiver to better support people who wish to move from institutions to community-based care are among the five recommendations recently approved by a state advisory committee on long term care.



Led by Medicaid Commissioner Carol Steckel, committee chair, and State Sen. Linda Coleman (D-Birmingham), co-chair, the Long Term Care Rebalancing Advisory Committee approved the recommendations March 31 following seven months' work by committee members to explore innovative programs and ideas that allow elderly and disabled Medicaid recipients to live at the most appropriate level of care.

"The appropriate placement and quality of care for patients is not always necessarily at a nursing home or long term care facility," said Steckel. "If we can enable patients to receive quality care in a more appropriate setting, then we need to examine any possibility to facilitate that."

The other approved recommendations included continuing the committee, studying the long term care environment in Alabama and developing an enhanced case management system that utilizes a team approach to assessing and identifying individuals' long-term care needs. One of the recommendations is already underway; the Programs for All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) project, which provides community-based services to patients eligible for nursing facility services, is currently under development in the Mobile area. [Read more >>](#)



- Alabama receives full federal certification for claims processing system
- Alabama nears completion of comprehensive HIE strategic plan

Alabama receives full federal certification for claims processing system

Alabama Medicaid is now eligible to receive enhanced federal matching funds to underwrite the cost of its claims processing system following official notice of full federal certification from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

The Agency was notified recently that the state's Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) was certified back to Feb. 25, 2008, the system's first day of operation, as a result of a rigorous testing and review process that culminated with a five-day, onsite visit by CMS in November 2009. Approximately one hundred Medicaid staff members, along with HP Enterprise Services employees, collaborated over a three-year period to analyze Agency needs and to design, test and implement a system that would meet all federal requirements.



Full certification makes the state eligible for a 75/25 federal/state matching rate for all MMIS operational expenses. To achieve full certification, the state was required to meet more than 300 specific federal requirements to demonstrate the accuracy and efficiency of Medicaid's claims processing system. In addition to the formal MMIS review, CMS also reviewed MMIS Certification requirements of the Agency's AMAES eligibility system. [Read more >>](#)

Alabama nears completion of comprehensive HIE Strategic Plan

Just three short months after the Alabama Health Information Exchange Advisory Commission first met, a comprehensive strategic plan for the state's health information exchange is almost ready to submit for federal approval, according to Kim Davis-Allen, Director of Transformation Initiatives for the Alabama Medicaid Agency and project director. The final plan will be submitted to the Commission for its approval on May 7.

"This has been a remarkable and exciting process," Davis-Allen said. "Members of the Commission and the six workgroups have invested hundreds of hours to create a detailed, visionary strategic plan that truly reflects the needs of our state while meeting federal requirements."



The Commission is specifically tasked with the creation of the plan to outline how the exchange will be constructed, implemented and ultimately utilized. The workgroups – Governance, Legal and Policy, Technical Infrastructure, Finance, Business Strategy and Communications and Marketing – were charged with exploring a specific area of impacting Alabama's proposed HIE network and reporting their recommendations to the Commission.

Appointed by Gov. Bob Riley, the advisory commission consists of 23 members from leading health care organizations and agencies across the state. In addition to the strategic plan, the Commission is responsible for development of an implementation plan and a State Medicaid HIT plan (SMHP) required to obtain funding to implement a meaningful use incentive payment program for providers.

Contact Us: Recipient Questions & Assistance: 1-800-362-1504
Provider Assistance (HP) 1-800-688-7989
Website: www.medicaid.alabama.gov

