



MassHealth Gets Approval for 5 More New Behavioral Health Services for Youths Under 21

The federal Medicaid agency known as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), recently gave its approval of the long-awaited State Plan Amendment necessary for MassHealth to pay for five additional behavioral health services. This follows the agency's previous approval of the new service "Intensive Care Coordination" last December, bringing the total number of approved new behavioral health services to six. Yesterday's approval now gives MassHealth the green light to provide Family Training and Support ("Family-Partners"), Mobile Crisis Intervention, In-Home Behavioral Services, Therapeutic Mentoring Services, and In Home Therapy Services for eligible MassHealth-enrolled children and youths under age 21. Currently, Crisis Stabilization remains the only service in need of CMS approval.

Last October, at CMS' request, MassHealth withdrew its written responses to the federal agency's formal requests for additional information. The withdrawal stopped the CMS 90-day review process, allowing more time for additional discussion and preventing a potential denial of the entire State Plan Amendment (SPA). For the next five months, a number of productive conversations and exchanges took place between CMS and MassHealth. When MassHealth formally resubmitted material in March, CMS requested that MassHealth remove Crisis Stabilization from the State Plan Amendment and re-submit it as a separate SPA. This was to allow continued discussion between CMS and MassHealth regarding outstanding issues on this services. A new SPA containing the Crisis Stabilization service was recently submitted to CMS. A decision should be reached by CMS prior to the service's planned start date on December 1, 2009. We will continue to keep you updated.

CBHI

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