

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

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December 22, 2000

MMCD All-Plan Letter 00012

**TO: MEDI-CAL MANAGED CARE PLANS****SUBJECT: UTILIZATION REVIEW OF INITIAL RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN**

The Medi-Cal Managed Care Division (MMCD) has established a Utilization Review (UR) Section to evaluate the appropriateness of health care services provided to Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are enrolled in Medi-Cal managed care plans (Plan(s)). The activities of the UR Section are designed to complement all other monitoring, quality improvement, and research functions conducted by MMCD as part of its quality improvement program.

The majority of Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are women of childbearing age are currently enrolled in Medi-Cal managed care plans. Medi-Cal managed care contracts require that all pregnant women receive a comprehensive risk assessment at their initial prenatal visit. As one of its initial activities, the UR Section is planning to review the level of Plan compliance with this contractual requirement. The ultimate goal of this activity is to improve birth outcomes for women enrolled in managed care plans.

The UR Section is currently developing the methodology to be used to conduct this review. The methodology will be finalized after discussion with Plan representatives. Plans will then receive the necessary methodology documents. MMCD intends to begin implementation of this review in January 2001. The main components of this UR effort will include:

- a survey tool designed to gather information regarding Plan processes for conducting initial comprehensive risk assessments of all pregnant women at the initial prenatal visit, including methods by which Plans determine that services were provided and identified risks followed up on;
- collection and analysis of all data relevant to delivery of comprehensive risk assessments for pregnant women at initial prenatal visit, both from Plans and from all other sources available to the Department of Health Services (DHS) and,
- on-site visits to Plans and medical record review, as necessary, after all data collected through the above efforts has been analyzed.

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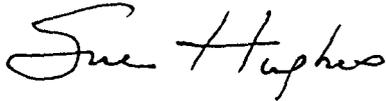
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MMCD will coordinate the activities of the UR Section with the review efforts of all other entities required to provide oversight of Medi-Cal managed care plans, to the maximum extent possible, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication both of function and on-site activity at Plan and Plan provider sites.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Bill Walsh, Chief of the Utilization Review Section, at (916) 657-2978.

Sincerely,



Susanne M. Hughes  
Acting Chief  
Medi-Cal Managed Care Division