

NOTICE OF GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES (DHCS) PROPOSES TO SUBMIT A STATE PLAN AMENDMENT (SPA) TO REMOVE PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FOR ALLERGY INJECTIONS AND ADD MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS (MFTs) AS A NEW FQHC/RHC BILLABLE PROVIDER UNDER THE MEDI-CAL PROGRAM.

DHCS will submit SPA 18-002 to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to seek necessary approvals to allow injections for allergy desensitization without prior approval. SPA 18-002 will also add MFTs as a new billable provider for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) and Rural Health Clinics (RHC) under the Medi-Cal program, pursuant to Assembly Bill 1863 (Wood, Chapter 610, Statutes of 2016).

Additionally, this notice provides information of public interest with respect to Section 440.386 of Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), which requires Medicaid states to publish a public notice to solicit public input regarding the amendment to the Medi-Cal Alternative Benefit Plan (ABP). DHCS assures full access to Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment services for people under 21 years of age, as described by 42 CFR 440.345. DHCS will submit SPA 18-002 to CMS to seek the necessary approval to remove requirements for prior approval for allergy injections. It will also add MFTs to the list of health care professionals whose services are reimbursable on a per visit basis in an FQHC or RHC. DHCS complies with the provisions of section 5006(e) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 by publishing the Tribal Notice for SPA 18-002 on February 23, 2018, and will hold a tribal webinar on February 28, 2018.

Defining Coverage for Allergy Injections

Existing DHCS policy provides for reimbursement without prior authorization for up to eight allergy injections provided in a 120-day period. If a patient's medical condition warrants additional injections, a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) is required. Effective January 1, 2018, Medi-Cal intends to repeal this TAR requirement, thereby allowing all medically necessary allergy injections without prior authorization. SPA 18-002 will be submitted to ensure DHCS obtains federal financial participation and necessary federal approvals. Allergy injections provided under the Medi-Cal ABP will be the same schedule of benefits as provided to Medi-Cal beneficiaries under the State Plan.

MFTs as a Billable Provider for FQHCs and RHCs

Existing DHCS policy allows MFTs to provide psychology services in an FQHC or RHC, but the visits are not reimbursable on a per visit basis. SPA 18-002 will add MFTs as a new billable provider type whose services are reimbursable on a per visit basis in an FQHC or RHC for newly eligible adults 19-64 years of age, pursuant to the Medi-Cal ABP. MFT services in an FQHC/RHC provided under the Medi-Cal ABP will be the same schedule of benefits provided to Medi-Cal beneficiaries under the State Plan.

Public Review and Comment

The California statute discussed above is available at www.leginfo.com. Interested parties may submit written comments, request copies of the statute, and/or request copies the written comments to Jim Elliott, Chief, Benefits Analysis Section; Department of Health Care Services; MS 4601; P.O. Box 997417; Sacramento, CA 95899-7417. All written comments must be received by March 23, 2018.