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DIRECTOR

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Care Services



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

November 16, 2022

To: Tribal Chairpersons, Designees of Indian Health Programs,
and Urban Indian Organizations

Subject: Notice of Proposed Change to the Medi-Cal Program

The purpose of this letter is to provide information regarding a proposed change to the Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) Medi-Cal Program that will be submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). DHCS is forwarding this information for your review and comment.

DHCS is required to seek advice from designees of Indian Health Programs and Urban Indian Organizations on Medi-Cal matters having a direct effect on Indians, Indian Health Programs or Urban Indian Organizations per the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). DHCS must solicit the advice of designees prior to submission to CMS of any State Plan Amendment (SPA), waiver requests or modifications, or proposals for demonstration projects in the Medi-Cal program.

Please see the enclosed summary for a detailed description of this DHCS proposal.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Indian Health Programs and Urban Indian Organizations may also submit written comments or questions concerning this proposal within 30 days from the receipt of notice. Comments may be sent by email to Vickshna.Anand@dhcs.ca.gov or by mail to the address below:

Contact Information

Department of Health Care Services
Office of Tribal Affairs
ATTN: Vickshna Anand
MS 8502
P.O. Box 997413
Sacramento, CA 95899-7413

Tribal Chairpersons, Designees of Indian Health Programs,
and Urban Indian Organizations

Page 2

November 16, 2022

In addition to this notice, DHCS plans to cover this SPA in the next quarterly Medi-Cal Indian Health webinar. Please note that Indian Health Programs and Urban Indian Organizations may request a consultation on this proposal at any time as needed.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Andrea Zubiate, Acting Chief
Office of Tribal Affairs
Department of Health Care Services

Enclosure



Department of Health Care Services Tribal and Designees of Indian Health Programs Notice

PURPOSE

To seek federal approval to continue supplemental payments to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), Indian Health Service-Memorandum of Agreement (IHS-MOA), and Tribal FQHCs for COVID-19 vaccine-only visits following the end of the Public Health Emergency (PHE).

BACKGROUND

During the PHE, DHCS provided supplemental payments outside the per-visit rates paid to FQHCs, RHCs, IHS-MOAs, and Tribal FQHCs when a COVID-19 vaccine was administered on its own outside of a billable visit. The supplemental payments were approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in State Plan Amendments (SPA) 20-0040 and SPA 21-0020.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES

This SPA proposes to permanently continue providing supplemental payments to FQHCs, RHCs, IHS-MOAs, and Tribal FQHCs when COVID-19 vaccines are administered on their own outside of a billable visit. Reimbursement will be outside of the applicable Prospective Payment Systems (PPS)/All-Inclusive Rate (AIR) or Tribal FQHC Alternative Payment Methodology (APM). Supplemental reimbursement amounts will be based on the fee schedule rates established under SPA 20-0040. The proposed effective date for SPA 22-0067 is the day after the PHE ends.

IMPACT TO TRIBAL HEALTH PROGRAMS (THPs)

DHCS anticipates this proposal will continue to provide increased access to COVID-19 vaccines for Medi-Cal beneficiaries who seek services at a THP. Please note DHCS will continue to pay the applicable AIR or Tribal FQHC APM, which is set at the AIR, if the vaccination is administered during an in-person visit that meets the requirements of a billable visit.

IMPACT TO FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS (FQHCs)

DHCS anticipates this proposal will continue to provide increased access to COVID-19 vaccines for Medi-Cal beneficiaries who seek services at a FQHC. Reimbursement for COVID-19 vaccine-only visits will not impact the annual DHCS reconciliation process. Please note DHCS will continue to pay the applicable PPS rate if the vaccination is administered during an in-person visit that meets the requirements of a billable visit.

IMPACT TO INDIAN MEDI-CAL BENEFICIARIES

Medi-Cal beneficiaries may have increased access to COVID-19 vaccines, which is expected to improve health outcomes for beneficiaries receiving this service.

RESPONSE DATE

Indian Health Programs and Urban Indian Organizations may submit written comments or questions concerning this proposal within 30 days from the receipt of notice. Comments may be sent by email to TribalAffairs@dhcs.ca.gov or by mail to the address below:

CONTACT INFORMATION

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