



December 21, 2023

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

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

The purpose of this letter is to provide an update to the Tribal Notice for State Plan Amendment (SPA) 23-0037, released on November 7, 2023. The enclosed update provides a correction regarding a typo in the background section that stated that LPCCs are already included in the Medi-Cal State Plan as a billable practitioner in Tribal FQHCs. This is not correct, they are currently only billable practitioners for non-FQHC providers and Indian Health Services Memorandum of Agreement (IHS-MOA) clinics. Please note that the rest of the document, including the impacts of the SPA, are accurate.

If additional information is needed, please send an email to Angeli.Lee@dhcs.ca.gov or by mail to the address below:

Contact Information

Department of Health Care Services
Director's Office
ATTN: Angeli Lee
MS 0000
P.O. Box 997413
Sacramento, CA 95899-7413

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, Chief
Office of Tribal Affairs
Department of Health Care Services

Enclosure



**Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)
Tribal and Designees of Indian Health Programs Notice
Addendum**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this addendum is to inform Tribal Chairpersons and Designees of Indian Health Programs and Urban Indian Organizations of a typo in the background section of proposed State Plan Amendment (SPA) 23-0037.

BACKGROUND

There is a significant unmet need for behavioral health specialists, due to the patient demand for these services and the existing shortage of staff. Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors (LPCCs) are masters-level health care professionals trained to evaluate a person's mental health and use therapeutic techniques based on specific training programs. Allowing Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), and Tribal FQHCs to bill for LPCC encounters will increase access to behavioral health services for patients in medically underserved, rural and remote areas in California. LPCCs are already included in the Medi-Cal State Plan as billable practitioners for non-FQHC providers under Psychology and Counseling services, and as a health professional for Indian Health Services-Memorandum of Agreement (IHS-MOA) clinics.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES

DHCS plans to submit SPA 23-0037 to CMS with a proposed effective date of January 1, 2024. The SPA seeks to authorize LPCCs as a health care professional eligible to provide reimbursable Medi-Cal mental and behavioral health services to patients served by FQHCs, RHCs, and Tribal FQHCs.

IMPACT TO TRIBAL HEALTH PROGRAMS (THPs)

DHCS does not anticipate an impact to THPs if they participate in Medi-Cal as an Indian Health Services-Memorandum of Agreement clinic. However, if a THP participates in Medi-Cal as a Tribal FQHC, this proposed SPA will make LPCC a billable provider. Adding LPCCs to the list of behavioral health professionals at Tribal FQHCs will expand flexibility and access for Medi-Cal members to receive the various mental and behavioral health services they need.

IMPACT TO FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS AND RURAL HEALTH CLINICS

To the extent that FQHCs and RHCs provide behavioral health services, this SPA is expected to expand access by increasing the number of health care professionals eligible to provide these services to patients served by FQHCs and RHCs. Adding LPCCs to the list of behavioral health professionals will expand flexibility and access for Medi-Cal members to receive the various mental and behavioral health services they need.

IMPACT TO AMERICAN INDIAN MEDI-CAL MEMBERS

As a result of this proposal, American Indian Medi-Cal members served by FQHCs, RHCs, and Tribal FQHCs will have increased access to mental and behavioral health services, which is expected to improve health outcomes for those receiving services.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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