

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

714/744 P STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814



June 27, 1988

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers

Letter No.: 88-40

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF COBRA PROVISIONS WHICH RESTORE AND CONTINUE MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTAIN DISABLED WIDOW(ER)S

The Department of Health Services (DHS) recently received information from the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) concerning preservation of Medi-Cal status for certain disabled widow(er)s under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 (OBRA '87).

Section 9116 of OBRA '87 creates a new group of Medicaid eligibles. Title II widow(er)s aged 60 through 64 who became ineligible for SSI payments because of entitlement to or an increase in Title II widowers benefits are affected. Beginning July 1, 1988, States must continue to consider these individuals to be SSI recipients for Medicaid purposes until their Part A Medicare (Hospital Insurance) entitlement begins.

As required by the new law, SSA is identifying and notifying potential Medicaid eligibles about this provision. For the time being, each potential eligible will receive a notice about this provision (see sample attached). Later this summer, SSA will stop sending notices to each potential Medicaid eligible under this provision. Instead, a paragraph will be added to the SSI income denial notice which will serve the same purpose.

SSA anticipates three mailings of notices to these potential Medicaid eligibles. The first mailing, which was sent the end of May 1988, will be the largest (estimates fall someplace in the 100,000 range, nationally), although no firm numbers are available as of this writing. SSA also expects the second and third mailings (which should be only a few thousand notices nationally), to be sent out in early June and mid-August.

DHS has initiated a letter to HCFA requesting specific instructions on determining Medi-Cal eligibility for this group of individuals. Pending a reply from HCFA, individuals who come into the county to apply under this OBRA 87 provision should have their eligibility determined under existing eligibility provisions, i.e., as an ABD-MN or Pickle. Counties must flag each case, pending further instructions from DHS on OBRA 87 eligibility requirements effective July 1, 1988.

Social Security Administration

Representative Payee for
SSA Beneficiary
c/o Leisure World
P.O. Box 1598
Benning Road Station
Washington, D.C. 20019

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT MEDICAID

You may be eligible for Medicaid, starting July 1, 1988. Special rules now allow some widows and widowers whose Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments stopped because of their Social Security payments to be eligible for Medicaid.

If you already have Medicaid, these special rules may allow Medicaid to cover more of your medical costs or cost you less.

WHO CAN RECEIVE MEDICAID

You may receive Medicaid under special rules if all of the following are true.

- o You are a widow or a widower,
- o You received SSI payments in the past,
- o You are at least 60 years old, but not yet 65 years old, on April 2, 1988,
- o You no longer receive SSI because of your Social Security payments,
- o You do not have hospital insurance under Medicare,
AND
- o You meet the other requirements of Medicaid.

WHERE YOU CAN APPLY FOR MEDICAID

Call or visit your local State welfare office. Ask them to review your case to see if you can receive Medicaid.

WHEN YOUR MEDICAID COULD START

Your Medicaid could start on July 1, 1988, if you meet all of the special rules. Medicaid for widows and widowers will end when you become eligible for hospital insurance under Medicare. After you apply, the State welfare office that handles Medicaid will send you a letter to tell you if you qualify.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, you should call, write, or visit your local State welfare office or any Social Security office. If you visit an office, please bring this letter. If you call, tell them you received a widow's or widower's Medicaid letter. That will help them answer your questions.

Herbert R. Doggette, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner,
Operations