

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

714/744 P STREET  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
(916) 445-1797



October 30, 1980

To: All County Welfare Directors

Letter No. 80-39

## PHASE-IN SCHEDULE FOR THE SIMPLIFIED MEDI-CAL DISABILITY REFERRAL SYSTEM (SMDRS)

This is to provide a summary of the features of the new Simplified Medi-Cal Disability Referral System (SMDRS) which is being phased in statewide on a county-by-county basis; to describe the eligibility worker training and other steps taken as part of a county's phase-in; and to provide the tentative phase-in schedule. This is a follow-up to DSS' All County Information Notice I — dated September 22, 1980 which also dealt with SMDRS.

BACKGROUND

SMDRS is a process designed to maximize federal reimbursement to the Medi-Cal program. County departments will now refer all Medically Indigent Adult applicants who respond positively to a health related question on the Statement of Facts (MC 210) for disability evaluation, rather than just those who appear to be disabled. The Disability Evaluation Division (DED) of the State Department of Social Services will process the applications and transmit the results of these disability determinations to the county department. The State will claim federal reimbursement for all persons identified as disabled by the process. Currently, Contra Costa, Marin, Orange, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, and Santa Clara Counties are participating in SMDRS. In these counties, there has been a significant increase in the number of persons determined disabled.

The estimated general fund savings from full implementation of SMDRS is \$45,000,000 per year. This is achieved through a significant shift in the cost of providing medical care from the state tax base to the much broader federal tax base.

From a processing standpoint, there are five key improvements in SMDRS, compared to the current process:

1. The paperwork effort required by eligibility workers for each referral has been reduced;
2. The tendency of the current system, to put eligibility workers in the position of medically evaluating their clients, has been eliminated;
3. The disability question on the Medi-Cal Statement of Facts has been rewritten to overcome the common reluctance of persons to identify themselves as disabled;
4. The form requesting information on a client's current medical condition has been simplified to be a symptoms checklist to be filled out by the client;
5. The State medical determination process now includes initial telephone contact with referred clients, to explore the symptoms checked by the clients. This greatly speeds medical determinations that ultimately

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affirm disability.

Since the simplified process involves little physical change from the current process, a minimum amount of time will be needed for county training to insure a smooth transition.

Training and Forms

The Department of Health Services' Eligibility Branch and the Department of Social Services' Disability Evaluation Division will conduct training in your county prior to actual implementation. Medi-Cal eligibility workers and supervisors, and other county department staff as appropriate, should be scheduled to attend. Training sessions should last one to two hours, including questions and answers. A four month's supply of all forms necessary to the SMDRS process will be made available to your staff at that time.

Training and Implementation Schedule

Attached is the current schedule for phasing the remaining counties into the SMDRS. The schedule may change, due to the uncertainties of timing in hiring and training of new staff needed by the Department of Social Services' Disability Evaluation Division to handle the increased workload. If the scheduled date for your county is projected to change, you will be notified at least a month in advance, to establish a new date. We will also call you three weeks to two months in advance of this implementation, to arrange for time and place of the training sessions.

If you have any questions, please call your Interim Medi-Cal Field Representative.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Barbara V. Carr, Acting Chief  
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch

Attachment

cc: Medi-Cal Liaisons  
Medi-Cal Field Representatives  
Expiration Date: April 30, 1981

